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August 12, 1952

ATOMIC ENERGY COMMISSION

APPROVAL FOR OPERATION IVY

Note by the Secretary

The attached report by the Director of Military Application is circulated by request of the General Manager for consideration by the Commission at an early date.

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SECURITY INFORMATION

ATOMIC ENERGY COMMISSION

APPROVAL FOR OPERATION IVY

Report by the Director of Military Application

Recently the Atomic Energy Commission indicated to the President the desirability of conducting full-scale atomic weapon tests at the Pacific Proving Grounds in 1952. It now becomes advisable to obtain Presidential approval for the dates of the tests and for the expenditure of fissionable materials involved. It is recommended that the AEC:

Approve the attached draft memorandum for dispatch to the Special Committee of the National Security Council for Atomic Energy.

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APPENDIX

DRAFT MEMORANDUM TO THE SPECIAL COMMITTEE  
OF THE NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL FOR ATOMIC ENERGY MATTERS

Subject: APPROVAL FOR OPERATION IVY

1. As you have been advised previously, the Atomic Energy Commission proposes to conduct full-scale atomic weapon tests (Operation IVY) at the Pacific Proving Grounds (Eniwetok Atoll) in the fall of 1952.

2. Two nuclear detonations are scheduled for Operation IVY. The first is proposed for early November, 1952, with the second proposed for some time later in November, the precise date to be determined by the results of the first shot. The objectives of this program are:

a. To produce, if possible, and study a full scale thermonuclear reaction;

b. To proof-test a high yield fission weapon designed to satisfy the military requirement for a fission weapon of about 500 KT yield.

3. The devices proposed for this firing program are:

[REDACTED]

This device is expected to produce a self-sustaining thermonuclear reaction and will be statically detonated at ground level.

[REDACTED]

[REDACTED]

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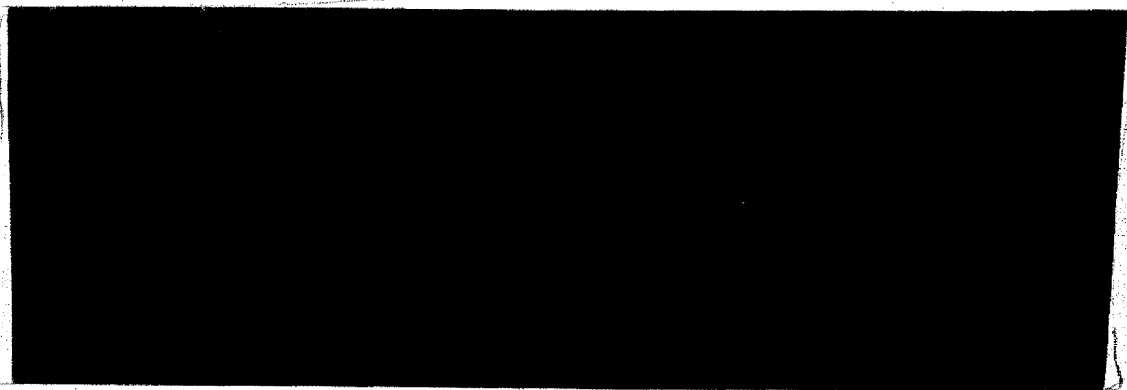
yield. Detonating this weapon will require the expenditure of approximately 75 Kg Oralloid (93.5% enriched).

Detonation of the fission weapon is contingent upon the results of the thermonuclear detonation since the latter, conceivably, might contaminate the test area to an extent which would delay or prevent the second detonation. This possibility is assessed as a remote one, however, and the operation plan calls for drop test of the fission weapon as soon after the first detonation as necessary preparations can be made.

4. Appropriate spare fissionable material, intended for substitution in case of unsatisfactory parts but not for expenditure, will be taken to the Pacific Proving Grounds. These spares, or the identical parts which they replaced, will be returned to the continental United States following IVY.

5. The AEC requests that the Special Committee of the National Security Council recommend to the President that he approve the execution of this program for full-scale weapons tests at the Pacific Proving Grounds, including:

a. Detonation of up to two atomic devices, and



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Appendix

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