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September 23, 1952

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Dear Mr. LeBaron:

It has become evident in the conduct of the IVY operation and in planning for future overseas tests that insufficient land area exists at Eniwetok Atoll to permit firing more than one very high yield device there during Operation CASTLE. Similarly, present estimates of the dangers resulting from detonating very high yield devices are such as to require the Joint Task Force to plan evacuation of the Eniwetok base complement during each such shot, a cumbersome and expensive procedure.

Since the CASTLE program as presently conceived requires land area for possibly three such shots, the Commission on September 11, 1952, approved the use of Bikini Atoll in connection with the CASTLE program under the program as now conceived:

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1. Eniwetok Atoll will continue to be the main base of operations as well as the normal location for relatively low yield experimental detonations, and as necessary and practicable for high yield detonations.

2. Bikini Atoll will be used to supplement Eniwetok by serving as site for detonations, particularly for those which may inflict considerable damage on the Eniwetok base or other island facilities there, or where it is possible by use of Bikini to avoid evacuation of Eniwetok.

The urgency of the situation with regard to the necessitated certain preliminary preparatory steps on the assumption of agreement of defense concurrence and support. The Commission informed the Department of Interior of our intention to send a preliminary party to Bikini about October 1, 1952. This information will be amplified as our plans develop. We have also authorized the Santa Fe Operations Office, United States Atomic Energy Commission, to proceed with the beachhead phase of construction at Bikini.

CLASSIFICATION CANCELED request Department of defense concurrence in, and support of, BY AUTHORITY OF DOE/overseas operations under this program.

10/29/84
 12/8/86

~~SECRET~~
 SECURITY INFORMATION

OFFICE	MAT:RPCampbell	MAT:WRSturges	MAR:JThayward	MA:KEFields	Gen. Counsel	Gen. Mana
SURNAME				F	Rice has OK'd	
DATE	9-19-52					

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We should like to note here that the final installation at Bikini will in no sense duplicate the main base at Eniwetok. It will be essentially a group of shot sites similar to those in the outlying islands at Eniwetok, farther removed because of the increased size of devices being tested. While there must be a small base camp in addition to the shot island facilities because of distance to Eniwetok, we intend it to be on the minimum scale necessary to support the shot sites developed there, with temporary and portable equipment used to maximum extent. It is hoped this approach will permit nearly all Bikini facilities to be returned to Eniwetok during the inter-test period.

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We trust also that this information will be of assistance to the Department of Defense in considering the preliminary report on military support for CASTLE dated August 4, 1952, presented by the Commander, Joint Task Force 132.

Department of Energy
Historian's Office
ARCHIVES

Sincerely yours,

UNITED STATES ATOMIC ENERGY COMMISSION

Gordon Dean
Chairman

Honorable Robert LeMayon
Chairman, Military Liaison Committee
to the Atomic Energy Commission

JTHayward/PCampbell/ded

Cys 1A & 2A: Addressee

3A & 4A: Chairman

5A: CJTF-132

6A: Mr. Tyler, Mgr., SFO

7A: Dr. Graves, LASL

8A: Dr. York, UCRL

9A: General Manager

10A: Secretariat *revised & destroyed 11-4-52 fm.*

11A: DMA/MIC File

12A: TG Reader

13A: DMA Reader

14A: DMA Files

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OFFICE ▶					
SURNAME ▶					
DATE ▶					