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UNITED STATES PACIFIC FLEET  
Headquarters of the Commander in Chief

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20 December 1952

From: Commander in Chief, U. S. Pacific Fleet  
To: Chief of Naval Operations

CLASSIFICATION CANCELLED  
AUTHORITY: DOE/SA-20  
BY: D. R. GILSON DATE 2-22-94

Subj: Danger Area for Operation CASTLE

Ref: (a) CNO Secret ltr Op-356/bjc ser 00473P36 of 31 Oct 1952

1. In complying with the request of reference (a) for recommendations on a revised danger area for Operation CASTLE, the following factors are considered pertinent:

a. Eniwetok Atoll and the territorial waters surrounding it have previously been designated as a closed area in accordance with United Nations Trusteeship agreements. Similar action if not previously completed should be taken to designate Bikini Atoll and its territorial waters as a closed area.

b. The Eniwetok Danger Area, a 150 by 200 mile rectangle centered on Eniwetok Atoll, was originally established both because of danger from radioactive fallout and to provide a convenient "exclusion area" for operations on Eniwetok. The significance of such an area for safety purposes is not of great importance. During Operation IVY, a general surveillance was kept of all shipping within a 500 mile radius of Eniwetok, and specific searches were made in downwind areas for itinerant shipping out to a distance of 800 miles. It is anticipated that until the phenomena associated with fallout are more clearly established, it will be necessary to continue such procedures without reliance on a designated "danger area".

c. A danger area of moderate size, however, is of considerable convenience for matters of security. Current instructions relative to security provide for denying entry into danger areas to unauthorized vessels and aircraft.

DOE ARCHIVES

d. In October 1946, a small rectangular area (12.8 X 22.5 miles) enclosing Bikini Atoll was designated as a Danger Area by HYDROPAC 1059B. This area was labeled as dangerous to navigation and personnel, and entry was prohibited except to those duly authorized by proper authority. In April 1947, HYDROPAC 1098B cancelled HYDROPAC 1059B as being sufficiently promulgated in Hydrographic Office Notice to Mariners Number 45 of 1946. This area is still listed as a "Danger Area" on charts currently issued and is noted as a "Restricted Area" in Sailing Directions for the Pacific Islands, Volume I, 1945 (H.O. Pub. No. 165).

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e. Since by definition danger areas comprise areas hazardous to navigation by vessels or aircraft, they obviously must not include inhabited atolls. In consideration of this fact, it is noted that a revised danger area cannot be extended eastward farther than Ailinginae Atoll since the adjacent atoll (Rongelap) contains 112 indigenes. Latitudinal expansion of a combined danger area beyond the present scope of Eniwetok Danger Area (150 miles) would entail a similar problem by overlapping Wotho Atoll, also inhabited. Thus, it is noted that the revised danger area proposed below contains only Eniwetok, Bikini, and Ailinginae - all of which are uninhabited atolls.

2. In view of the above, it is recommended: ,

a. That the status of Bikini Atoll and its territorial waters as a closed area under United Nations Agreement be established if this has not previously been done.

b. That upon the establishment of Bikini Atoll and its territorial waters as a "closed area", the "Bikini Danger Area" mentioned in subparagraph 1.d. above be cancelled.

c. That the Eniwetok Danger Area be extended along its north and south parallels to a distance of 64 miles east of the center of Bikini Atoll to longitude 166° 28' east. Accordingly, with modification of one coordinate only, the revised ENIWETOK/BIKINI Danger Area would be that area bounded by the Meridians 160°35' - 166°28' east longitude, and by the parallels 10°15' - 12°45' north latitude, an area 150 by 350 miles.

d. That consideration be given to withholding publication of the revised danger area in the requisite hydrographic notices until such time as the Atomic Energy Commission has material on Bikini of special security significance.

/s/ W. K. PHILLIPS  
Chief of Staff

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