US DOE ARCHIVES

326 U.S. ATOMIC ENERGY

RG COMMISSION

Collection Former Comm. Dean

Collection Former Comm. Dean

Box Classified Render File Former Comm. Date Date Folder (Tuly 1952 They December 31, 1952)

(VITal) (G. Dean)

130205

## Dear Mr. LeBarons

It has become evident in the conduct of the IVI 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 Bikimi Atoll in connection with the CASTLE program under the program as now conceived:

- 1. Enivetok 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 shot island facilities there, or where it is possible by use of Bikini to avoid evacuation of Eniwetok.

  BEST COPY AVAILABLE.

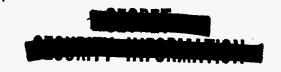
The urgency of the situation with regard to time necessitated certain preliminary preparatory steps on the assumption of Department of Defense concurrence and support. The Commission informed the Department of Interior of our intention to send a preliminary party to Bikini about October 1, 1952. This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

We request Department of Defense concurrence in, and support of, overseas operations under this proposed program.

OFOUNITY INFORMATION

national of the Francisco vithin the mational of the Francisco vithin the meaning of the Francisco of the Fr

Zert Costle



. 2 .

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.

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.

Sincerely yours,

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

UNITED STATES ATOMIC ENERGY COMMISSION

Signed GORDON DEAN

DOE ARCHIVES

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

