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UNITED STATES
ATOMIC ENERGY COMMISSION

May 26, 1953

MEMORANDUM FOR MR. LEWIS L. STRAUSS

Reference is made to our telephone call this morning as to the risk we run in the proposed eleventh shot.

While in every one of our shots there is some element of risk, the Commission has evaluated the risk in this shot and is confident that the device can be detonated safely. The Commission plans to apply even more stringent standards than ordinarily applied to minimize the possibility of fall out and shock damage.

The shot is of great importance since the energy release of the device must be known precisely for the CASTLE series. It is estimated that there will be a delay running possibly to three months if it is shot in Eniwetok. One of the reasons for this is that F-84-Gs are used in cloud sampling which gives us our basis for radio chemical analysis. These must be shipped to Eniwetok since they cannot be flown. Our group in charge of firing control and special high speed instrumentation, Edgerton, Germanhausen & Grier, now busily engaged at Nevada, will have to have adequate time in which to set up their paraphernalia. The period of three months before the shot could be fired could conceivably be contracted if a high priority is assigned by all the organizations that must collaborate in the Eniwetok operation. I doubt seriously if this could be brought to two months, however, by even a high priority effort. If there should be a three months delay, this in turn may cause a three months delay in the CASTLE series, particularly if the desired energy release is not secured.

The Commission believes this shot, in spite of its high energy release, has smaller risks than many of the tower shots that we have shot heretofore. Furthermore, being the last of a series we can be even more careful than usual with the weather conditions. In terms of actual risk we believe that there is no hazard greater than surrounds our normal operations.

The Commission believes that this shot is essential to the thermonuclear program.

/s/

Gordon Dean
Chairman

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