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COLLECTION RG 326 51-58 Secretary
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UNITED STATES AERONAUTICS ADMINISTRATION
WASHINGTON, D. C. 20585
HISTORICAL DOCUMENT NUMBER: 356

Dear General Eisenhower:

In a consultation with the President yesterday it was his opinion that I should notify you immediately concerning the weapons test program which is being conducted at the present time at Eniwetok.

The significant event to date is that we have detonated the first full-scale thermonuclear device. This took place on October 31st, Washington time. This was an experimental device which demonstrated that a thermonuclear explosion is feasible. It will probably be a year before we will be able to test the first deliverable thermonuclear weapon.

From early and incomplete evaluation of the results, the yield is estimated roughly to have been approximately 10 megatons, that is, ten million tons of TNT equivalent. If the more precise and lengthy methods of measuring yield, which are now in process, confirm the above yield, the detonation exceeds what we had anticipated.

The island of the Atoll which was used for the shot -- Elugelab -- is missing and where it was there is now an underwater crater of some 1500 yards in diameter.

No significant fall-out of radioactive contamination has occurred. As a precaution against fall-out, Joint Task Force 132 had evacuated the Atoll for the shot. The personnel have now returned to the Atoll.

Present plans call for the conduct of the second and final detonation of this operation not earlier than, but probably

CLASSIFICATION CANCELLED
OR CHANGED TO C-11-61
BY Authority of [unclear]
EX Early DATE 3-24-65

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CLASSIFICATION CANCELLED
BY AUTHORITY OF DOE/OC

CARL WILSON 3/27/94
H.R. SCHMIDT 7/16/75
BY: DICK KOOPLE 3/19/82

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No. 1000000000
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on, November 12th, Washington time; depending upon weather, detonation will be a proof-test of a high yield fission bomb dropped from a B-36 aircraft.

We are attempting to keep the Russians in the dark as to what has been and will be exploded in the test series. In view of the large number of personnel involved in the operation, and in view of the size of the detonation and the fact that the light could be observed at sea for several hundred miles, it is not likely that we can for long keep from the Russians the fact that there has been a thermonuclear explosion; although to date weather has played into our hands in that the winds have held the cloud for a period of seven days over the Pacific making it virtually impossible for the Russians to obtain samples from the cloud and thus determine the nature of the explosion.

Unclassified seismic stations picked up the explosion. They will be able to place the epicenter of what they will probably regard as an underwater earth tremor as being in the neighborhood of the Eniwetok Atoll. We nevertheless do not propose to confirm that the tremor was attributable to our test series.

Since calling you on November 7th a speculative story, originating in Los Angeles, to the effect that we have detonated a hydrogen bomb, has received rather wide dissemination. However, barring some now unforeseeable circumstance, it is our plan to make no announcement concerning the test series until after it is concluded -- probably on November 13th. We have always made such concluding announcements in the past. In the announcement we propose to say, as we did at the conclusion of the 1951 tests, that "the test program included experiments contributing to thermonuclear weapons research."

While the information concerning the Eniwetok tests is of immediate significance, there are other problems facing the Commission in the next few months concerning which you may wish to be informed.

We have prepared for you a Top Secret memorandum, running to about fifteen pages, dealing with our current stockpile position, the organization and operation of the Commission, its relationship

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to the office of the President, the Department of Defense, the Congress, and which sets forth some of the current problems facing the Commission in the next few months. We are prepared to make this available to you at any time you choose. We are also prepared to brief you completely, at any time you designate, on the atomic energy program.

Be assured that the Commission is happy to assist you in every possible way.

Sincerely,

Gordon Dean
Chairman

General Dwight D. Eisenhower
Augusta, Georgia

U.S. Atomic Energy Commission
Office of the Secretary

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11/15/52