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The Secretary of Defense  
Washington

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May 16, 1960

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Dear Mr. Chairman:

I refer to your letter of April 22, 1960, which requested that you be informed by May 15 of the Department of Defense interest in acquiring the Eniwetok Proving Ground and, if the Department has no requirement for the Proving Ground, concurrence in placing it in a caretaker status.

I agree that the Eniwetok Proving Ground should not be retained as a nuclear test facility. The Department of Defense has a requirement for the area as an addition to the Pacific Missile Range and I appreciate your offer to arrange for transfer of the facility and equipment to the Department of Defense on a non-reimbursable basis.

The Pacific Missile Range will be directed to contact your Albuquerque Operations Office in the near future to make arrangements for the transfer which we hope can be effective on 1 July 1960.

Subject to your concurrence, we will expect the Pacific Missile Range to negotiate with Holmes and Narver for operation of the facility. In order to meet Department of Defense needs for the Eniwetok Lagoon as an impact area for missiles, and to stay within funds which can be made available to support the facility, it is most desirable that personnel at Eniwetok Proving Ground be reduced by 1 July to approximately 145 employees involved in operating the facility for the Department of Defense. You may expect this to be a matter to be negotiated by the Pacific Missile Range.

This material contains information affecting the national defense of the United States within the meaning of the espionage laws, Title 18, U.S.C., Sec. 793 and 794, the transmission or revelation of which in any manner to an unauthorized person is prohibited by law.

Sincerely yours,

/s/

James H. Douglas  
Acting

Honorable John A. McCone  
Chairman  
U. S. Atomic Energy Commission

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Handwritten notes and stamps on the right side of the page, including a large wavy scribble and a stamp area with the name 'D.P. Cannon'.

DECLASSIFIED BY: DEEXECSEC  
DECLASSIFIED ON: 6 DEC 1995

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