MEMORANDUM FOR ADMIRAL BLOOMFIELD

Subject: Dispersal of Atomic Weapons in the Bonin and Volcano Islands

1. On 18 November 1955, the Secretary of State in response to a letter from the Secretary of Defense said he had no objection to the dispersal of a small number of atomic weapons to the Bonin and Volcano Islands. However, he went on to say that it is assumed that the storage of atomic weapons in the Islands would not prevent later resettlement of Bonin Island inhabitants, and then he further said that it was his understanding that the Department of State would be advised prior to the initial deployment of those weapons (Tab "A").

2. The Secretary of Defense passed this information on to the Joint Chiefs of Staff and said it was O.K. for the dispersal of weapons to the Islands subject to the reservation of the Secretary of State. He also indicated that prior notification to the Secretary of State was necessary (Tab "B").

3. Following receipt of this approval from the Secretary of Defense, the Joint Chiefs of Staff requested CINCPAC to make necessary arrangements for the early dispersal of atomic weapons to the Islands (Tab "C"). At the same time, the Chairman, Joint Chiefs of Staff sent a memorandum to the Secretary of Defense requesting that the Secretary of State be advised of this initial deployment of atomic weapons to the Islands.

4. On 6 February 1956 the Chief of Naval Operations stated that one weapon with core was placed in storage on Chichi Jima (Tab D).

5. On 14 February 1956 Robertson expressed some concern that the weapons had been dispersed without adequate time for State to be notified and he asked that in the future they...
be notified sufficiently in advance to coordinate the matter with State. We are unable to find a record here that State was formally notified that the weapons had been dispersed to the Bonin Islands (Tab E).

Very respectfully,

CHAIRMAN'S STAFF GROUP

Directed Sec to investigate further and keep Secs left office. Copy of correspondence advising Sec State was found. Have asked that copy be made available to Secs for completion & return.

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