

ADDRESS NAVY DEPARTMENT  
BUREAU OF SHIPS

Buships Code (348-420)

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NAVY DEPARTMENT

BUREAU OF SHIPS

WASHINGTON 25, D. C.  
XXXXXXXXXXXXXX

AND

BUREAU OF MEDICINE AND SURGERY



Dated - 74  
Serial-5299

23 DEC 1949

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[REDACTED]  
To: Chief of Naval Operations

Subj: USS INDEPENDENCE (CVL 22) - Disposition of.

Ref: (a) CNO ltr. Serial 0516P414 of 16 November 1949.  
(b) BUSHIPS ltr. C-381-3(423-425-348) C-CVL22 of  
28 September 1949.

1. In reference (a) it was requested that additional information concerning the condition of INDEPENDENCE be furnished to facilitate the decision as to the proper disposition of the ship. The intensity of the radioactive contamination acquired at Bikini has decreased during the intervening three years, so that many parts of the ship now are below the tolerance level established for peacetime industrial operations. Other parts, however, remain above this level. During the past year, INDEPENDENCE has been used as a test laboratory for radiological decontamination studies. Large quantities of fresh fission product mixtures were introduced on board during these studies and subsequently were drained into empty tanks aboard the ship for stowage. Other contaminated materials that have been used in connection with the research program of the Naval Radiological Defense Laboratory also have been put on board INDEPENDENCE.

2. In order to permit disposing of INDEPENDENCE as scrap, without subjecting the Navy to possible medico-legal litigation, it would be necessary to remove and otherwise dispose of the contaminants that have been introduced during the research studies, as well as to survey the ship and decontaminate as necessary to bring all parts below tolerance levels. The cost of these operations undoubtedly would exceed the scrap value of the vessel. In view of this factor, of the current plentiful supply of steel scrap from other sources, and of the prospective benefits of the

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proposed tests to the design of ships and weapons, it is considered that disposition of INDEPENDENCE by sinking incident to the underwater explosion tests proposed in reference (b) will serve the best interests of the Navy.

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CV 222

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