

Those Listed Below

June 21, 1954

Rodney L. Southwick, Acting Director
Division of Information Services

SIXTH ASSOCIATED PRESS ARTICLE ON MARSHALLESE

SYMBOL: ISP:RLS

Attached for your information is the sixth in a series of articles on the Marshallese. It has been approved and returned to Associated Press with modifications noted. It was reviewed by State, Defense and Interior as well as AEC staff.

Attachment:
Copy of sixth article

Addressees:
John Hall, Special Projects
Capt. Guthrie, DMA
Dr. Bugher, B&M
Herschel Schooley, DOD
W. Yeomans, Dept. of Interior

CC: I. Wechsler, USIA
Col. Hirsch, OGB

AB:me 7/18/54

Majuro, June 10 (AP)--The Marshallese Congress Hold Over Committee disclosed today it has sent a letter to Ambassador Henry Cabot Lodge, Jr., that the "people are now assured" there will be no more mishaps as followed the March 1 hydrogen explosion.

The March 1 explosion was followed by fallout from a radioactive cloud. More than 200 natives on Rongelap and Utirik had to be evacuated from their homes. Some were burned and the 82 Rongelap people will not be able to return to their home for a year.

The Rongelap people arrived yesterday at their new homes built on Ejit Island, adjacent to Majuro. More than 1,000 natives from the Majuro Atoll were on hand to greet them and help them get settled in the village built by the Atomic Energy Commission.

The Hold Over Committee, after the March 1 explosion, sent a petition direct to the United Nations protesting against the nuclear tests in the Marshall Islands and asked that they be stopped.

~~Dwight Heine, spokesman for the Committee, said two weeks ago the Committee would not withdraw the petition despite overtures by Trust Territory High Commissioner Frank E. Midkiff that they tell Lodge they are satisfied with what had been promised.~~

~~In a quick visit Hersk around May 21 gave the Committee what he said would be a satisfactory reply to Lodge and the letter, which left Majuro by Plane yesterday, followed this pattern.~~

The letter sent to the Marshallese AMD dated June 2, said: "Ambassador Henry Cabot Lodge, Junior, United States Delegate to the United Nations;

CONFIRMED TO BE RECORDED
AUTHENTICATED
BY E. J. [illegible]
[Signature] 4/17/56

(more)

Dear Sir: Our High Commissioner, Frank E. Midkiff visited us on the twenty-first of May, conferred with members of the Marshallese Congress Holdover Committee and other Marshallese leaders and discussed the petition that we have sent to the United Nations recently. He explained the importance of the thermonuclear experiments which were carried out in these islands, but also assured us that the authorities in charge are doing everything humanly possible to prevent the recurrence of possible danger. Your reply to the Marshallese petition was also read by him and was translated into our language. The people are now assured that no more atolls will be taken away for experimental purposes and everything possible will be done to prevent the recurrence of mishaps and also that they will be compensated fairly for their losses.

"The Marshallese People appreciate the spirit in which the United States Government has received our petition, your approval and commendation of our petition reinforce our faith in the United States Administration.

"In conclusion we would like to make it clear that in no way should our petition -- direct to the United Nations -- be interpreted as a sign of our lack of confidence in the officials of the trust territory. On the contrary, we have found them competent and trustworthy. We would have done the same thing under any administration or administrators. The seriousness of the problem itself is solely responsible for the step we have taken. Sincerely, Members of the Marshallese Congress Holdover Committee." The letter was sent to Midkiff for relay to Lodge.