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Those listed below

April 14, 1954

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Rodney L. Southwick, Acting Chief
Public Information Service

DRAFT RELEASE ON MILITARY VICTIMS OF FALL-OUT

SYMBOL: ISP:RLS

Attached for your review and comment needed by close of business Wednesday, April 16, 1954 is a copy of a draft announcement by the Department of Defense on hospitalization at Walter Reed of 30 members of the weather groups.

You may recall that AEC's original statement mentioned 28 weather personnel.

The Army Surgeon General's office recommends issuance to prevent speculative stories on the "hospitalization" of the men who probably will arrive in the U. S. on Thursday or Friday. Leakage of the story without an official statement having been issued might result in erroneous reports of the men being in such serious condition that they were flown to a U. S. hospital. This, in turn, might result in exaggerated speculation on the condition of the natives and add additional concern over the Jap fishermen.

Attachment:

Draft release by DCD

Access # 326-78
Box 3
File = NMFB-B

Addressees:

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4/14/54

DOD Proposed Press Release

Thirty enlisted men of the Army, Navy and Air Force who were exposed to moderate amounts of radiation during the H-bomb experiments at Eniwetok, March 1, are being returned to the Walter Reed Army Hospital, Washington, D. C., for thorough medical examinations, the Department of Defense said today.

The group is expected to arrive in Washington by air Saturday, April 17. Of the thirty, 24 are members of the Air Force, 3 of the Army, and 3 of the Navy.

Although none of the men has experienced any symptoms of radiation illness, all have been under close observation following exposure during the experiments last month.

The action to hospitalize the men for complete observation and examination was taken after a recommendation had been made to the Surgeons General of the Army, Navy and Air Force by the Joint Task Force Commander, Maj. Gen. Percy W. Clarkson.

According to Maj. Gen. Silas B. Hays, Acting Surgeon General of the Army, every known test will be made at Walter Reed to rule out the possibility of both immediate and long-range radiation damage before the men are returned to full military duty. These tests are expected to take about one month.

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