

REPOSITORY NASA - College Park
COLLECTION RG 306 Office of Secretary
1951-58 Correspondence
BOX No. 186
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Memorandum for Those Listed Below

Subject: Proposed Interior Department Announcement on Return of
Rongalapese

AEC 125/30, approved by the Commission on February 21, 1957, included as Appendix "E" a draft announcement to be proposed to the Department of Interior for issuance when the Department determines that the Rongalap inhabitants can return to their home atoll.

The Department of Interior later provided us with a revision of this draft, which has been edited by the Divisions of Information Services, Military Application and Biology and Medicine. It is similar to the draft proposed to Interior, although less detailed. A copy is attached for your information.

We are advised that a letter has been sent from the Commission to the Joint Committee, stating that the Commission has determined that the Rongalap people may be safely returned. Since the announcement will be made by the Department of Interior, which has responsibility for the actual decision as to the natives' return, we do not believe that further notice to the Committee is necessary. Mr. LaPlante's office concurs in this judgment.

After receiving Commission comment on this draft, we will return it to the Department of Interior, with a notation that it would be wise to consult the State Department for advice on timing of issuance in relation to possible international impact.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Morse Salisbury, Director
Division of Information Services

Attachment

Addressees:

Lewis L. Strauss, Chairman (via E. Hollis) cc: Secretariat
Thomas E. Murray, Commissioner General Counsel
Willard F. Libby, Commissioner Gen. Starbird, DMA
Harold S. Vance, Commissioner Dr. Dunham, B&M
K. E. Fields, General Manager (via B. F. LaPlante, GMSA
H. S. Traynor, AGM)

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by marriages with non-residents of Rongelap and by births, and about 200 persons will be returned to the island.

The superficial radiation skin burns received by some of the people as a result of their exposure were healed by the fall of 1954. There has been a regrowth of hair, normal in color, texture and amount, in the individuals who experienced loss of hair following the fallout. The people have received periodic medical examinations from Atomic Energy Commission specialists and Trust Territory physicians. Medical examinations will be continued in the future.

Plans for the rehabilitation of Rongelap include the construction of new homes and community buildings, replacement of village access paths, increased water storage facilities, and installation of a two-way radio communications facility.