

TRUST TERRITORY OF THE PACIFIC ISLANDS
OFFICE OF THE HIGH COMMISSIONER

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In reply refer to:
Ser 1745

MAY 6 1954

[REDACTED]
Major General P. W. Clarkson
Commander, Joint Task Force Seven
APO 187 (HOW), c/o P.M.
San Francisco, California (Inter-Island)

Dear General Clarkson:

Dr. John Bugher, Director of Division of Biology and Medicine, Atomic Energy Commission, conferred with my staff on Monday, May 3, during his brief stopover here en route to his headquarters in Washington.

He informed us that the Utirik people will be able to return to their home atoll as previously scheduled following the completion of the current testing operations, provided that inspections reveal absence of radioactive materials in quantity injurious to health. Dr. Bugher could not give us a definite date of return, but we assume that it will be sometime in June as previously planned.

He also informed us that the earliest date of return of the Rongelap people, considering safety factors, would be at least six months from this date; but for planning purposes it would be best to operate under the assumption that they would be away from their home for one year in order to afford a sufficient margin of safety.

Dr. Bugher plans periodic inspections by AEC medical personnel of the Rongelap people in their new location as well as after return to their home atoll, and the Trust Territory agrees to cooperate in making these inspection trips possible with a minimum of inconvenience. Dr. Bugher recognized that from the time of relocation the operating authority will be the Trust Territory, although costs arising in connection with the Rongelap as well as the Utirik people will be borne by the AEC. He shared our thought that the necessary logistic services will require drawing upon the resources of the Navy.

We have discussed the few possible relocation sites for the Rongelap people at length, taking into consideration the advantages and disadvantages of each possibility from the point of view of logistics, medical care, and the sociological and psychological effects. We have agreed that the three adjacent islets of

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Ejit, Enearij, and Pegarian in Majuro Atoll are the most desirable sites for relocation of the Rongelap group for the following reasons:

- (1) Owned by the Government.
- (2) Rent would not have to be paid.
- (3) Political factionalism and intrigue and the question of land title and chiefly authority would not be involved.
- (4) Contiguity to the civil administration area on Majuro, but not immediately in the area, making medical and logistic support and close administrative supervision possible while holding undesirable social effects to a minimum.
- (5) Accessibility to naval and medical personnel from Kwajalein; use of the hospital at Majuro would be possible for AEC medical personnel.
- (6) Good anchorage and fishing potentialities.
- (7) A more typical native setting physically, ecologically, and culturally, than the other possible sites; partial reliance on native resources as supplement to necessary logistic support would be feasible.
- (8) Despite small size of Ejit (8 hectares, 2 ares), large enough for number of buildings contemplated; Enearij and Pegarian (2 hectares each) could be used to locate the animals now being contracted for.
- (9) The islands are well covered with trees providing desirable and pleasant setting. **BEST AVAILABLE COPY**
- (10) Proximity to friends and relatives in Majuro Atoll would prevent a feeling of isolation.
- (11) Although this possible site of relocation has not yet been discussed with the Rongelap people, it is believed that it would be agreeable to them on a temporary basis.

Dr. Bugher states that he foresees no difficulties in the choice of this site so far as AEC is concerned.

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Necessary building arrangements and requirements have been discussed with Mr. Tobin, District Anthropologist in the Marshalls, who consulted on this subject with the Magistrate and the leaders of the Rongelap

group prior to his departure for Headquarters. It is thought that the building requirements will consist of sheet metal roofs and sawed lumber for houses and public buildings and concrete for cisterns. The buildings, with the exception of the cook house, should be floored and raised 2 feet above ground level.

<u>Buildings Needed</u>	<u>Specifications</u>
(1) Church and school house	Approx. 40'x25'x10' height
(2) Dispensary and medical storeroom	" 15'x15'x10' "
* (3) Storeroom	" 20'x10'
* (4) Cook house	" 30'x20'x10' "
* (5) Messing house	" 40'x40'x10' "
(6) Latrines (at least 8)	" 5'x 7'x 7' "
(7) Dwelling houses (15)	" 20'x15'x10' "
(8) Cisterns (concrete and wood)	To be figured later

* Under one roof.

Sleeping platforms may be added later to the houses if necessary to increase living space. A porch should be built onto the front of each house to provide shade and to cool the interior. The houses should be well ventilated with sufficient windows provided with wooden shutters which may be dropped in rainy weather. Screening is unnecessary. It is understood that Holmes and Narver will undertake all of this construction.

It is recommended that a landing craft type ship be used to transport materials for construction of the necessary buildings. Cisterns should be constructed first in order to commence storage of water as soon as possible. It should be feasible to recruit labor at Majuro. Dr. Bugher recommended that the Rongelap people not be used for heavy labor for medical reasons.

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Dr. Riesenbergr, Staff Anthropologist at HiComTerPacIs, will accompany Mr. Tobin to Kwajalein and Majuro sometime next week in order to consult with officials concerned and to assist in making the necessary arrangements. They will be available to assist in planning construction by Holmes and Narver, and it is suggested that a member of that Company rendezvous with them at Kwajalein to proceed to Majuro for at least an overnight stay. It is thought the Rongelap Magistrate and elders should accompany this party in order to insure that site planning conforms with their desires and needs.

Sincerely yours,

Frank E. Midkiff
High Commissioner

cc: District Administrator, Marshalls
Distad Rep Ebeye
Admiral Clarke, Kwajalein
Mr. William C. Strand, Wash.
Dr. John Bugher, AEC, Wash. ✓

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