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San Francisco, California

17 March 1955

RG 326 US ATOMIC ENERGY
COMMISSION
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Dr Alvin C Graves
Los Alamos Scientific Laboratory
P. O. Box 1663
Los Alamos, New Mexico

Dear Al,

Our weather studies seem to be progressing quite satisfactorily. We have had a recent example of the relation of sun activity to our weather. It is not yet time to get real excited over it, but in this case 6 days following increased activity of the sun we had an upset in the weather pattern which would have been more or less predictable had we had the information in time. Rex gets his reports from Colorado and only once a week by slow boat. But we will try to get them to send us the information by radio.

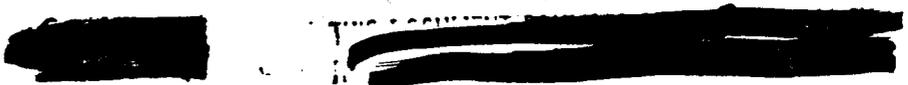
He is doing a splendid job and Palmer and his people at Wheeler Field are a great help.

Rex has made some interesting presentations on fallout patterns and when vertical components of wind are considered it is really amazing how the picture changes. In a specific example which they worked up, the fallout area was increased by a factor of about 20 in the western sector and about 4 in the eastern sector. This was the BRAVO shot--the one so much discussed at the symposium.

Some time ago we were asked whether we had any suggestions for different locations for shots. We have not done anything specific. Kure looks like it might have possibilities. It is about 60 miles west of Midway and about 12 miles north. It is uninhabited and belongs to the U.S. The temperatures are moderate, highest about 80, lowest about 40. The entrance to the lagoon is shallow and I do not have figures on the actual depths of water. Midway, as you know, has fine air strips and good facilities for ships, plus room for personnel. It is about 900 miles from Hawaii. We have continuous weather records going back about 17 years and the winds seem to be favorable almost all of the time from April to October and a good portion of the time from November to March.

The enclosure gives more information on this place.

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Carl Wilson 4/1/55

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17 March 1955

As for weather at P.P.G., it is quite evident that October gives us the best wind conditions from the standpoint of fallout patterns. There is more cloud cover, though. I understand that photography is not so important for the big ones. It might be economical to do the small shots in March and then go back in October for the two big ones. Anyway, it's just a thought.

I note that you are plugging along in Nevada and hope that the results are to your liking.

I still plan on coming back around the 20th of April and would like your advice, when you can give it, whether it will be convenient to meet you around the 21st.

With very best regards,

Sincerely,

Sincerely

C. B. MOMSEN
Rear Admiral, U.S.N.

Encl:
Extract from Sailing
Directions

Copy furnished:
Capt Ashford

[REDACTED]

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EXTRACT FROM

SAILING DIRECTIONS THE PACIFIC ISLANDS, VOL. III

H.O. Pub.No. 166

* * * *

13-47 KURE ISLAND (28°25' N., 178°20' W., C.S. Chart 4177).—An atoll closely resembling Midway Islands in both formation and appearance. The atoll is about 15 miles in circumference, is somewhat oval in shape, and encloses a lagoon, the entrance of which is about 1 mile wide. The entrance is on the southwestern side of the atoll and is shallow. No dangers have been observed outside the reef.

A bank, with depths of 20 to 30 fathoms, surrounds the atoll and extends offshore about 1 mile.

Kure (Green) Island, the name applies to the largest island of the atoll, lies in the southeastern part of the lagoon, is about 20 feet high, covered with small shrubs, and similar to Eastern Islands of the Midway Islands. Westward of it are several small islets, of which Sand Island is larger and about 10 feet high. From the appearance of the islets, it may be assumed that the atoll is sometimes visited by severe storms, the sand being thrown into numerous cones and pyramids.

* * * *

13-33 MIDWAY ISLANDS (28°13' N., 177°23' W., C.S. Chart 4176).....

* * * *

13-41 Winds.—During the summer months, winds are generally light and variable from northeast, southeast, or southwest until about the middle of July, when fresh to strong northeast trades set in and continue through August. During the winter months from October to April, gales frequently occur, working around from southeast through southwest to northwest, with occasionally a few days of fine weather, but always a rough westerly sea.

Southwest winds are always accompanied by a low barometer and rain squalls, but rain occasionally comes with northeast and southeast winds and a high barometer. Northwest winds following southwest storms generally indicate clearing weather.

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