

IMMEDIATE

March 28

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OATUZYUW RHEGNV00168 1491730-UUUU--RHEGGTN. 79/5/79

ZNR UUUUU

O P 291725Z MAY 79

FM USDOE-NV ROGER RAY LAS VEGAS NV

TO RHEGGTN/USDOE BRUCE WACHHOLZ EV-201 GERMANTOWN MD

RHEGGTN/USDOE W W WEYZEN EV-444 GERMANTOWN MD

INFO RUEVHHN/SNL UPTON NY

RUHVAAA/USDOE PASO HICKAM AFB HI W J STANLEY

RUHBBAA/USDOE REP KWAJALEIN JIM WATT

AE

BT

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ON SATURDAY EVENING (LAS VEGAS TIME) I RECEIVED A RADIOTELEPHONE CALL FROM DOE REP JAMES WATT (KWAJALEIN), RELAYING AN URGENT QUERRY FROM DR PRATT.

DR PRATT WAS AT RONGELAP AND ADVISED THAT "A RONGELAP OFFICIAL" HAD HEARD THAT THE SOUTHERN ISLANDS OF RONGELAP ATOLL HAD BEEN FOUND TO BE RADIOACTIVE. DR PRATT ASKED WHAT HIS RESPONSE SHOULD BE CONSIDERING THE LATE HOUR, THE HOLIDAY WEEKEND, AND THE SENSITIVITY OF THIS SUBJECT, I DICTATED THE FOLLOWING STATEMENT FOR RADIO RELAY TO DR PRATT.

" THERE IS SOME RADIATION EVERYWHERE IN THE WOLRD - SOME FROM

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NATURAL RADIATION, SOME FROM WORLDWIDE FALLOUT, AND SOME MORE LOCALIZED FROM THE BOMB TESTS AT BIKINI. THE SEPTEMBER SURVEY OF RONGELAP REVEALED THAT RADIATION LEVELS THERE WERE NO HIGHER THAN EXPECTED. THEY ARE IN THE SAME RANGE AS THE RADIATION FROM NATURAL SOURCES SUCH AS COSMIC RAYS, AND ARE IN THE SAME RANGE AS MANY PLACES IN THE U.S. MAINLAND. ALTHOUGH WE HAVE NOT COMPLETED THE ANALYSES OF SAMPLES TAKEN AT RONGELAP IN SEPTEMBER WE HAVE NO REASON TO EXPECT ANY NEW RESTRICTIONS ON EITHER DIET OR LIFE STYLE".

ON MONDAY AFTERNOON (MEMORIAL DAY), I RECEIVED, AGAIN FROM J. WATT, ACKNOWLEDGEMENT AND APPRECIATION OF MY RESPONSE. HOWEVER, DR PRATT RELAYED A FURTHER REQUEST THAT I IDENTIFY THOSE "NORTHERN ISLANDS" WHICH ARE "RADIOACTIVE".

I RESPONDED THAT I HAVE NO DATA AVAILABLE AT HOME AND WOULD HAVE TO DEFER UNTIL TUESDAY MAY 29 LAS VEGAS TIME.

MY IMMEDIATE RESPONSE TO DR PRATT REGARDING THE SOUTHERN ISLANDS I JUSTIFY ONLY BECAUSE I KNOW IT IS TRUE AND WE NEEDED AN IMMEDIATE RESPONSE. I ACCEPT FULL PERSONAL RESPONSIBILITY FOR IT. HIS FOLLOW-ON QUESTION IS SOMETHING ELSE, AND RELATES TO THE WHOLE MATTER OF THE

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PROTOCOL FOR TELLING PEOPLE WHAT WE KNOW, AND THE LIMITATIONS ON OUR KNOWLEDGE.

BY THIS MESSAGE I DEFER TO YOU ON QUESTION NO. 2.

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