



UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

404175

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY
UNIQUE DOCUMENT # SAB2006331A001
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20240

JUN 26 1968

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Dear Chairman Seaborg:

This is in reference to my letter of December 7, 1966, in which I requested the Atomic Energy Commission to undertake a survey of Bikini Atoll to determine whether radioactivity levels are such that the former inhabitants might be returned. At that time I stated that if return seems feasible from the standpoint of health hazards, I would request the Department of Defense to consider whether there is a continuing military requirement for Bikini.

During the time since I wrote that letter and since the AEC made its field survey of the atoll in April 1967, several events have transpired to complicate the consideration of the entire Bikini question. There has been very substantial public interest in the problem of the former Bikini people and in the question of their return. I have requested the Department of Defense to look into its military requirements on an urgent basis and that Department assures me that it has given the project a high priority. I understand that the study undertaken by your agency is now virtually complete and that it will indicate that in general there is no health hazard which cannot be overcome by steps recommended in the proposed report.

The Department of the Interior has the basic responsibility for the welfare and development of the people of the Trust Territory including, of course, the former Bikini people. Our responsibility and concern for this particular group of people and their interest in returning to Bikini, however, impinges upon the interests and responsibilities of the Departments of Defense and State and the National Security Council. In the circumstances, I should like to amend my request of December 1966 to ask that, at the same time you complete your review of the study and the resulting report and send copies of the report to me, you also send copies to Assistant Secretary of Defense for International Security Affairs, Paul C. Warnke; Assistant Secretary of State Joseph J. Sisco, and to Mr. Charles E. Johnson of the National Security Council.

Sincerely yours,

Secretary of the Interior

Dr. Glenn T. Seaborg
Chairman
Atomic Energy Commission
Washington, D.C. 20545

From
Box # 3108
JOB # 7238

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DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY DECLASSIFICATION REVIEW	DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR DECLASSIFICATION REVIEW
1. CLASSIFICATION RETAINED	1. CLASSIFICATION RETAINED
2. CLASSIFICATION CHANGED TO:	2. CLASSIFICATION CHANGED TO:
3. CONTINUING NO DOE CLASSIFIED INFO	3. CONTINUING NO DOE CLASSIFIED INFO
4. COORDINATE WITH:	4. COORDINATE WITH:
5. CLASSIFICATION CANCELED	5. CLASSIFICATION CANCELED
6. CLASSIFIED INFO RECLASSIFIED	6. CLASSIFIED INFO RECLASSIFIED
7. OTHER (SPECIFY):	7. OTHER (SPECIFY):
1ST REVIEW DATE: 5/15/75	1ST REVIEW DATE: 5/15/75
AUTHORITY: 48 CFR 101.11	AUTHORITY: 48 CFR 101.11
NAME: [Redacted]	NAME: [Redacted]
2ND REVIEW DATE: 1/1/75	2ND REVIEW DATE: 1/1/75
AUTHORITY: ADD	AUTHORITY: ADD
NAME: [Redacted]	NAME: [Redacted]

CLASSIFICATION DATE
[Redacted]

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