

DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY DECLASSIFICATION REVIEW	
1ST REVIEWER-DATE: <i>6/10/94</i>	DETERMINATION (CIRCLE NUMBER(S)) 1. CLASSIFICATION RETAINED 2. CLASSIFICATION CHANGED TO: 3. CONTAINS NO DOE CLASSIFIED INFO 4. COORDINATE WITH: 5. CLASSIFICATION CANCELLED 6. CLASSIFIED INFO BRACKETED
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July 29, 1953

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Classified Memorandum to President

Attached at Tab A is an unclassified memorandum on the return of the people of Bikini to their home island together with a proposed public announcement and draft letters to the Secretary of Defense, the Chairman of the Atomic Energy Commission and the Bureau of the Budget, as well as to me, directing us to get on with the resettlement task.

In anticipation of a desire on the part of former Bikini residents to return to their atoll, I asked the Atomic Energy Commission in December 1953 to conduct a radiation survey to determine whether the atoll was safe for habitation. I also asked the Defense Department to determine whether there were any further military requirements for Bikini. The results of the survey were being given considerable news interest today to build up the future of Bikini. Such interest was generated by a question sent to the UN Trusteeship Council by a Peace Corps volunteer on Bikini whose most of the former Bikini people live. This was followed by articles on Bikini appearing in Time and Newsweek magazines. Interest in the question has also remained high in the Trust Territory.

Meanwhile, the Atomic Energy Commission and the Defense Department concluded that Bikini could be returned to the natives and we are now working on plans to effect this return. It is possible that certain elements of the Government's decision to return Bikini to its former residents could bring the former Bikini residents back to their home island for their return to Bikini. However, the old Bikini atoll is not safe as an atoll site for the resettlement of

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DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY DECLASSIFICATION REVIEW	
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July 29, 1953

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...activities which resulted in a high level of radioactivity making the area uninhabitable for many years. ...has become an intercontinental ballistic missile recovery vehicle launch and scoring area and the western terminus of the Pacific missile testing range. There are defense installations on Minn. and there is continuing research on missile impact. These testing requirements with their inherent hazards will not accommodate the return of the former Minn. inmates. ...is a study being continuing current activities on Minn.

We have not included reference to this situation in our proposed ...lest it offset the positive features of the ...return. ...in question of ...the brief answer at ...is ...

We have also cleared with the Department of Defense and State ...letter to the High Commissioner which he can pass to the former ...people advising that their security requirements with respect to ...and that their return is not possible at this time.

Secretary of the Interior

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