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682 Eniwetok Atoll (12-1-47)

INFORMATION FOR THE PRESS PREPARED IN COLLABORATION WITH THE
DEPARTMENT OF STATE AND THE NATIONAL MILITARY ESTABLISHMENT
TO SUPPLEMENT THE STATEMENT OF THE UNITED STATES ATOMIC ENERGY
COMMISSION ON THE ESTABLISHMENT OF PACIFIC EXPERIMENTAL INSTALLATIONS

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

The purpose of the installations now under construction in the Pacific is to provide a suitable area for the continuing conduct of a wide range of field work to establish by experimentation the indicated results of laboratory studies carried out in facilities of the Atomic Energy Commission. The scientific and technical operations of the proving ground will provide new fundamental data and a broader understanding of the phenomena of nuclear fission which will facilitate advances in peaceful as well as in military applications of atomic energy.

All test operations will be under laboratory control conditions, with full security restrictions as required by the Atomic Energy Act of 1946.

The area of the installations will be closed as a safeguarding measure as provided for in the United Nations Trusteeship Agreement for the former Japanese mandated islands, and the Security Council of the United Nations will be duly notified to this effect.

Eniwotok Atoll was selected as the site for the proving grounds after the careful consideration of all available Pacific Islands. Bikini is not suitable as the site since it lacks sufficient land surface for the instrumentation necessary to the scientific observations which must be made. Of other possible sites, Eniwetok has the fewest inhabitants to be cared for, approximately 145, and what is very important from a radiological standpoint, it is isolated and there are hundreds of miles of open seas in the direction in which winds might carry radioactive particles.

Construction will be supported through the Hawaiian Islands, Johnston Island and Kwajalein Island.

The permanent transfer elsewhere of the island people now living on Aomon and Biihiri Islands in Eniwetok Atoll will be necessary. They are not now living in their original ancestral homes but in temporary structures provided for them on the two foregoing islands to which they were moved by United States forces during the war in the Pacific, after they had scattered throughout the Atoll to avoid being pressed into labor service by the Japanese and for protection against military operations. The sites for the new homes of the local inhabitants will be selected by them. The inhabitants concerned will be reimbursed for lands utilized and will be given every assistance and care in their move to, and

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(more)

reestablishment at their new location. Measures will be taken to insure that none of the inhabitants of the area are subject to danger; also that those few inhabitants who will move will undergo the minimum of inconvenience.

The construction program, which is being undertaken by the Armed Forces for the Commission, will consist of the installation of complete facilities, including housing, utilities, communications, protective structures, instrumentation circuits, and control and observation posts. Some of the military installations used during the war will be rehabilitated.
