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COLLECTION R6326 Tommy Microw Job# 1320

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This document consists of 1 pages.  
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29 FEB 1972

In reply refer to:  
I-20746/72

MEMORANDUM FOR THE CHAIRMAN, INTERAGENCY GROUP FOR MICRONESIAN POLITICAL STATUS NEGOTIATIONS

SUBJECT: Early Release of Eniwetok (U)

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Reference is made to Secretary of Defense letter, dated 9 September 1971, to Ambassador Williams concerning Department of Defense long-term land requirements in the TTPI.

The reference established future U.S. Military land requirements in the TTPI and specified that, by 1975, Eniwetok Atoll (in the Marshall Islands) could be returned to the Marshallese.

As requested by your office, a review was conducted concerning the possible release of Eniwetok at an earlier date, with a view toward using such a release as a negotiating lever with the Micronesians. This review has confirmed the following:

- The islets in the northern half of the atoll have been devastated by nuclear weapons tests, while some larger islets in the south have been leveled for base support and technical facilities. Coconut palms, the primary vegetation necessary for native survival and income, are either non-existent or scarce on all islets. Contamination, both chemical and radiological, on the northern islets is still considered hazardous for long-term habitation. All islets may require extensive and long-term external support (primarily water and food) to support human life. Extensive cleanup of islets, both from a contamination and debris standpoint (as was done at Bikini), will be required prior to any extensive resettlement of the atoll.

- Projected Future Uses. The following future uses for Eniwetok as a research and development and scientific test support location have been identified.

-- Project HAVE COFFEE (was SEMIOR GIRL), a satellite detection test program by the Air Force Avionics Laboratory, occasionally uses Eniwetok as a staging base for its electronically equipped test aircraft. The project has an expected duration through FY 1973.

*MRA 7 Insult Secretary*

-- The AEC-sponsored Eniwetok Marine Biological Laboratory will continue to study local marine and terrestrial animals and vegetation. This effort is conducted by the University of Hawaii and will no doubt continue indefinitely.

This document consist of 3 Pages.

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- The Pacific Cratering Experiments (PACE) are a series of high-explosive tests planned for Eniwetok. These tests are funded by the Defense Nuclear Agency and will be conducted by the Air Force Weapons Laboratory. The tests are expected to start shortly. PACE tests, as tentatively planned, will be completed by CY 1974. PACE will require the exclusive use of Sites FRED, IRENE, JANET, SALLY, TILDA, URSULA, PEARL, RUBY, and YVONNE.
  - The Artificial Upwelling Program is a Department of Commerce-funded study to be conducted at Eniwetok by Scripps Institution of Oceanography. Under this study, drill holes will be made in the nuclear craters Cactus and LaCrosse on Site YVONNE to test the fertilizing effect of deep nutrient-rich sea water on marine organisms and to assess the merits of a drill hole for acquisition of that water. This study is proposed to start in 1972 and continue for 6 to 8 years.

There are no foreseeable DOD requirements beyond CY 1975. Subsequent to completion of the PACE tests and Project HAVE COFFEE, the return of the entire atoll appears feasible, subject to retention of some residual rights. Prior to that time a phased program of release, to hasten cleanup and rehabilitation of some islets, could begin. Sites ELMER, DAVID, and BRUCE have been identified as the best for this purpose. These sites are located relatively near Eniwetok itself and are suitable in size for habitation.

It is believed the non-DOD scientific studies listed above could continue indefinitely if the proper initial arrangements and agreements are made with the Micronesians as a part of the overall status settlement. However, since the long-term benefit of these efforts will accrue primarily to the native population, it is believed the U.S. should attempt to retain use rights to the minimal land and facilities required on a non-reimbursable basis.

Prior to the return of any islands in the Eniwetok Atoll, however, a survey to determine cleanup and fix-up requirements, followed by a rehabilitation program for each islet, is necessary to permit resettlement. The Defense Nuclear Agency and the Atomic Energy Commission should ensure that adequate decontamination measures have been accomplished before the former inhabitants are allowed to return.

With the exception of initiating and conducting safety surveys and possible resultant sanitization efforts, any agreement releasing Eniwetok Atoll, or selected sites thereof, must avoid obligating Defense for the responsibility of any additional monetary compensation - either for past use or future rights retained. DOD financial obligations to the Ujelangese have been adequately fulfilled in the negotiations pertaining to the current indefinite use rights. Any contemplated early release of Eniwetok should be considered an additional bonus dividend.

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In the course of negotiating the return of Eniwetok, it is desirable that no-cost, joint-use rights for aircraft operations be agreed to. Additionally, no-cost use rights should be retained which will permit some limited storage (where facilities already are in place) and non-nuclear weapons testing on mutually agreed uninhabited sites.

It is hoped the unexpected early release by DOD of some Eniwetok islets and the CY 1974 return of the entire atoll, will prove a beneficial negotiating asset for you in your dealings with the Micronesians.

Aware of the negotiating benefits to be derived from proper timing regarding the subject, this office will await your suggestions before initiating any action in the way of requesting surveys to be conducted pertaining to rehabilitation in the area.

Copy to:

AEC



(Signed) G. Warren Nutter

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