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Boporable Carl T. Durhsa Chairman, Joint Committee on Atomic Smergy Congress of the United States

Dear Mr. Durhamt

LOATING UNIT STRATES CONTRACTOR

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-OSTRATIC STATE : DECEMPENT

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After the relatively beavy fallout on the Marshall Islands March 1, 1994, 62 inhabitants were evecuated first to Kwajalein and to Ejit where they are now living. There have been public statements, concurred in by the Atomic Energy Commission, Department of Interior and the Department of State to the effect that these people will be returned to their hose Island of Songelap as soon as health considerations permit. Such a statement was submitted to the 17th Session of the U. H. Trusteeship Connoil Subcommittee of Petitions, March 27, 1955 by Mr. Vernom D. McEay, Special Representative of the Administering Authorities for the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands.

Several radiological surveys of the Marshall Islands, especially Rongelap Atoll, have been mude during the past two and one-half years. The latest survey (July 23-24, 1956) indicates a presence of a residual contamination on the Island of Rongelap, but at a level that is acceptable from a health point of view, both for the potential external gamma radiation exposure and the strontium-90 content in the food supply, with the possible exception of land crube.

Therefore, the position of the Atomic Snergy Commission is that the Rongelapese could be returned to their home island as soon as rehabilitation procedures on the Island of Rongelay are completed, with the advice that land crabs not be caten at this time. The plans for the return of the Rongelapese have been concurred in by the Department of Interior which is the Government agency responsible for the Trust Territories, and by the Department of State.

Honorable Carl T. Durham

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Reconstruction of homes and other facilities on the island, which have deteriorated during the period of inoccupance, will begin in the near future. It is expected that the inhabitants can be returned by early summer.

Sincerely yours,

K. E. Fields

General Manager

-cc: Secretariat (1)
General Mangger (1)
Congressional Communications Section (2)

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