

Those Listed Below

June 8, 1954

Morse Salisbury, Director
Division of Information Services



ARTICLES BY ASSOCIATED PRESS ON MARSHALL ISLANDS VISIT

SYMBOL: ISP:RLS

The attached series of articles on the visit of Bill Waugh, Associated Press, who visited Kwajalein and Majuro with permission of the High Commissioner of the Trust Territory have been reviewed by the Department of Defense, State, Interior and AEC staff. Modifications as shown in the copy have been agreed to by the AP Washington Bureau.

It is, of course, likely that the AP desk may do some editing or rewriting depending on the requirements of transmission time on the AP wire system.

All deletions and changes suggested by AEC staff and the three departments were accepted.

Words in brackets were deleted from the article and underlined words were added.

Attachment:

Waugh articles

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Addressees:

John Hall, Office of Special Projects
Capt. Garthie, DMA
W. Yocums, Department of Interior
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Kwajalein May 28 (AP). Shrewd Marshall Island leaders believe their protest to the United Nations against American hydrogen bomb experiments put a whip in their hand and they don't intend to lay it down. Their people are scared. The natives of Rongelap and Utirik Atolls were endangered by the March 1 hydrogen bomb blast and many were injured. Natives of Bikini and Eniwetok were uprooted from their home Atolls in 1946-47 and have little hopes of regaining them. I talked to the Marshallese who drafted the protest which went direct to the United Nations. They recognize that it might give Russia some political ammunition in the June session of the United Nations, that it might hurt close American friends in the Trust Territory, Civil Administration of the Island chain. They say they will not budge from their stand as stated in their petition. Overtures already have been made through High Commissioner Frank Midkiff to the Marshallese. In a quick trip here last week Midkiff suggested that they send word to United Nations delegate Henry Cabot Lodge Junior that "we are sure everything is being done that is necessary for our welfare."

Fluent, English speaking Dwight Heine, Superintendent of Marshall Island intermediary schools and leader of the petition, told me: "some people think we are naive children of the tropics. We are not as naive as they think. We will send Ambassador Lodge a reply. It will be polite but we will not send anything like has been suggested to us." There is no doubt -- among Marshallese or Americans on the scene -- that the United States Government has gone all out to help the 82 natives from Rongelap and the 154 from Utirik. They have had the finest medical care. They have been adequately fed and sheltered. They have been compensated for lost Copra crops. Utiriks 154 inhabitants left today for their home Atoll. They took with them from Kwajalein 100 tons of bounty.

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Rongelap people will not be able to return to their homes for a year. Nearly every one in this village suffered injury from the fallout from the Hydrogen bomb cloud. Almost all have recovered. They will be removed in early June to Ejit in the Majuro Atoll.

Ejit is a 14 acre lush Island. On it the AEC Joint Task Force Seven is building a complete village. The United States will provide for them throughout their stay there.

But a 30 year old Magistrate and leader of Rongelap, said in an interview:

"My people don't feel good about not going home. We fear we may have fate of Bikini."

The Bikinians, Heine said, "were given a raw deal."

A lagoon people, the 200 Bikinians were bounced shuffled from island to island until finally put on isolated Kili -- an island which many months of the year is inaccessible because of heavy surf.

Heine and several Americans in the trust territory said the Bikinians are not happy as they feel like they have been put in jail.

The petition was signed by the Holdover Committee of the Marshall Island Congress. The 11 man committee is empowered to act for the Congress in between sessions. It is made up of 6 from the Assembly and 5 from the House of IROJI (Lords).

Heine, Member and spokesman for the Committee, steadfastly denies that any said no American knew or took part in drafting the petition to the United Nations. He said: "We spent a month working on it. We purposely did not let Mister Neas (Acting District Administrator Maynard Neas) or others (in the

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Trust Territory) know about it. We were afraid they would get in trouble."

The petition was finished and ready for mailing April 20 but Heine said he waited until April 22, the day a plane was due, to drop it in the mailbox. He said he planned to register it but arrived at the Post Office too late.

Postmistress Irene Records did not recall the letter but said she remembered that Heine had been in and inquired about registering a letter.

Heine said he also sent a copy of the petition with a letter to the "editor of the Washington Post." The letter said in part: "You may be interested to know that yours is the only publication to which we are sending such a copy. We have chosen you simply because we understand your paper to be a fair and reliable one of national standing,"

There was 1 other Marshallese petition to leave the Island. It was circulated by school children and sent to Midkiff. The language was much milder than the one sent to the United Nations. Students and all Marshallese and American teachers signed it.

The latter part of March a doctor arrived at Majuro and told Neas they would have to get about 100 blood samples from unexposed Marshallese to use as a yardstick in treatment of the [injured] exposed natives.

[Neas said the official had no intention of giving the natives an explanation. He protested to the official.]

The medical group arrived April 5, met with the natives to give them an explanation Neas requested and the next day the samples were obtained.

Three days before the medical group arrived, Neas held a weekly staff meeting with department heads and Marshallese leaders. The question arose about sending a petition to the High Commissioner signed by both Trust Territory employees and Marshallese.

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Neas said he thought this was improper, but told the Americans if they wanted they should write individual letters to Midkiff. He continued:

"I, for one, did. I wrote to the High Commissioner and noted the feeling of the people (about the H-bomb). For instance 1 Marshallese said at the meeting 'What are you Americans trying to do? Open up the gates of Hell?' I could tell that there was resentment and fear."

Heine was on a Trust Territory ship at Kwajalein the day of the hydrogen explosion. He said:

"We saw the flash first. It shock the ship. Water around the ship seemed to shake. There were several explosions that went wham wham."

The same day the ship pulled out and arrived the next day at Utirik.

"We were met by many canoes," Heine added. "The first question they asked was 'Is there war on?'"

"The people said they saw something like flames or shooting stars but too low to be shooting stars. They said children cried and hid in the brush."

Heine said that on the way back to Majuro he began working on the idea of a protest. He did not learn until his arrival at Majuro that the 2 atolls had been contaminated,

Heine and other members of the Holdover Committee began work immediately. On April 5 Neas met with the Marshallese to discuss a copra tax. After he had left, Heine said, he told the Marshallese to remain in Majuro and they finalized plans for the petition.

"We are a small people -- only 11,000 of us," he said. "and the only way to get people to pay attention is when we call loud."

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"We felt the American people were bound to hear about it (the petition). We have faith they (Americans) will do something about it."

Last year the United States sent 2 Marshallese to the United Nations. This year, Heine said, the State Department said there were no funds for such a trip.

He commented:

"It is our desire to have a representative there. It would be advantageous to the United States especially if Russia accuses America of using our people like guineapigs for experiments. Who could say it isn't so. After all we are an ally and not an enemy." But apparently they think these naive people might cause embarrassment." 7

Last year Mrs. Dorothy Kabua was present with Heine during the interview. Others were Atlan Anien, speaker of the Assembly, and Kabua Kabua, president of the House of IROJI (Lords).

The Marshallese are practical people. They recognize that the nuclear tests might have to continue. If this is the case, said Heine, "our petition outlines satisfactory alternatives."

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Kwajalein, May 30 (AP). The United States pulled all stops in giving aid to 236 Marshallese sprinkled by radioactive ash from the March 1 hydrogen test.

For nearly 10 days I have had a free hand at Kwajalein and Majuro in talking to injured Marshallese, their leaders, military men and Joint Task Force Seven personnel which ran the hydrogen tests this year.

There has been no pressure or coercion on myself or the people I interviewed. All spoke frankly. I came away with this opinion:

The AEC, the Joint Task Force, the Trust Territory and the Kwajalein Naval Air Station under command of Rear Admiral R. S. Clarke did a magnificent job in meeting this unforeseen near tragedy.

The question arises why wasn't this possibility foreseen. Actually it was, and was quickly detected. Two things contributed to the incident. First, as AEC Chairman Lewis L. Strauss announced the "detonation was larger than expected." It spread over a much wider area as result. Even this would have caused no trouble but a sudden unforeseen shift in high altitude winds carried it over three inhabited islands.

Since the March 1 detonation, the AEC has announced two additional tests. The AEC and Department of Defense announced on May 13 that the 1954 tests were concluded.

On subsequent shots in the test series After the March 1 shot there
was no significant fall-out on inhabited areas. occurred. The March 1
fall-out necessitated the evacuation of eighty-two Rongelap natives,
who had the most serious burns, of whom about 45 had superficial skin
burns, 154 from Utirik and 28 U.S. military personnel from Rongerik. There
were no deaths and none of the people will die from the experience, one

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officer told me. Major General P. W. Clarkson, Joint Task Force Commander, Clarkson got his first tip that something had gone awry from weathermen on the night of March 1. The next day planes landed at Rongelap and Utirik and scientists decided that natives and military personnel should be evacuated immediately. High speed destroyers went into action and evacuated all the people. The evacuation was completed in two days and the affected people were on Kwajalein receiving medical assistance.

A top Naval Medical Research Institute military medical team were was flown to Kwajalein from Bethesda, Maryland. the United States. They arrived here March 10. The medical unit returned to the U.S. from Kwajalein early in May when it became evident that all exposed natives and U.S. personnel would recover without serious consequences. The Americans were transferred to Tripler Army Hospital in Honolulu and since they have been returned to the U.S. to duty with their parent organization.

The decision to allow the Utirik people to return to their island immediately and the need to find a temporary home for the Rongelap people for one year was made in April. A survey party visited the two Atolls. It consisted of representatives from Joint Task Force Seven; Commander in Chief, Pacific Fleet; High Commissioner, Trust Territory of Pacific Islands; the Atomic Energy Commission Engineer Contractors (Holmes & Narver) and the native Magistrates of Rongelap and Utirik. The Utirik people will be furnished adequate water and food supplies by the U.S. For the next year the Rongelap people will live on Ejit in the Majuro Atoll. They will leave for their new homes the first week in June.

The AEC contractors have constructed an entirely new village of 27 buildings. There will be 16 homes with an over-all measurement of 16 by 32.

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when it was determined there were no serious injuries among them, were moved to Ebeye, a small island connected with Kwajalein by a reef. I watched them prepare to leave for their home. They had been living in a tent city. They were taking it back with them on the LST 1157.

The natives and their personal belongings were brought to the LST by landing craft. As they were walking to it from the smaller craft, a salty boatswain mate barked: "All right, let's get some swabbies out there to help these old folks." The sailors swarmed onto the smaller vessel and literally carried aboard some of the aged, feeble natives. Aboard already was nearly 100 tons of cargo for the Utirik natives to take home.

The natives were assigned living quarters in one portion of the ship.

Travelling with them were Jack Tobin, Marshallese speaking anthropologist for the Trust Territory; Dr. S. H. Riesenberg, staff anthropologist who is on leave from the University of Hawaii; and Marion Wilds, District Administrator Representative for the Trust Territory on Ebeye.

Lt. Comdr. Richard S. Scott, Jr., skipper of the LST had arranged for his own ship's cooks to feed the natives during their probable two or three day stay aboard ship. The natives, he said, would use the crew's mess hall and would in addition to what the crew was fed have sufficient fish and rice, two main items in the Marshallese diet.

Unloading the 100 tons of cargo was going to present a problem. The Utirik lagoon is studded with coral heads, making it unsafe for a ship that size to enter. Lt. Comdr. Joseph W. Tilford, executive officer, said the cargo would be loaded in small boats and then taken on a seven mile run to their home island.

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"Even there," he said, "we have problems. We can't get the boats any closer than 35 yards of the beach. We will have to use block and tackle and winch the stuff out of the boats."

Before the natives will be put ashore the ship will send a team of sailors ashore to make sure it is safe.

When the natives pulled out they left behind dogs, pigs, and chickens. Trust Territory and military people who have visited the islands since say that the dogs have killed off the chickens and reverted to the wolf.

They figure that starvation probably has caused a war between the hungry dogs and pigs. All will be destroyed as a safety precaution.

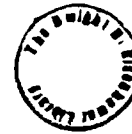
The livestock later will be replaced by the AEC Joint Task Force.

Before it returns to Kwajalein the LST will go to Rongelap. There it will let 13 natives go ashore to recover some personal property. The LST also will pick up two schooners belonging to the Rongelap people and transport them to Ejit.

After talking to the Marshallese I feel that they are not as concerned with the explosions as they are that the tests might force them to lose their home lagoons. The fate of the Bikinians, evicted in 1946 and now on isolated Kili, stands like a ghost over these people.

Find a solution to their lot and what dissension has risen here against the tests will disappear. The Marshallese like Americans, believe me.

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Kwajalein, May 29 (AP). The 82 Rongelap natives showered by radioactive ash from the March 1 hydrogen bomb explosion call themselves "the poisoned people." , 30-year-old leader of the Rongelap people said the radioactive ash rained down on his people for 24 hours. "It looked like salt," he said in an interview. "It came down like a light rain. You could feel it strike your skin. It burned when it touched." Unlike the people of Utirik who thought a war had started said his people knew what had taken place. He explained "I have seen (explosions) many times before." The March 1 explosion he said was the biggest he had ever witnessed. Asked to describe what he saw he said through a native interpreter: "First saw light then the smoke. Smoke went up up and right through clouds. Later heard and felt blast. Wind so strong some people fell down. It banged doors." I talked to and other Rongelap natives in the Mess Hall they are using here on Kwajalein until they are taken to Ejit in the Majuro Atoll. They will remain at Ejit for 1 year until their home Atoll is safe. The Atomic Energy Commission Joint Task Force is building a completely new village for them at Ejit. The Marshallese are very friendly people. When I arrived at the Mess Hall everyone there -- from pre-school age children to old women -- came over and shook hands.

Sitting across the table from me was 12-year-old who giggled and talked throughout the interview. The Marshallese people are movie fans said her favorite actor was Joe Louis. "He knows lot of boxing. I like fight." Hillbilly and Hawaiian music, they said, were their favorites. Western movies also are tops with them. One old timer said of movies: "Like boom boom berrer kiss kiss." In talking to the Rongelap people you could not help but feel a certain amount of sadness among them.

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Asked how the people felt about being moved to another Atoll, _____ said:

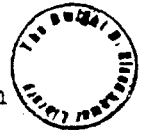
"They do not feel good about it. Fear may have fate of Bikini." The Bikini people have been moved from island to island are now on isolated Kili. Everyone I have talked to say the Bikinians are extremely unhappy about their loss. All but 18 Of the 82 Rongelap people some 45 suffered some injury from the radioactive burns. ash Many of the burns were only slight. That more serious injury did not occur was largely due to the work of 29-year-old _____ the Rongelap medical aide. _____ said the next morning he noticed that "the fresh water in containers outside turned yellow-bright yellow. (Eds Note: Such colorations are not caused by radioactivity.) I told people not to use."

A seaplane landed at the Atoll the second day after the blast and the next day a destroyer arrived at the scene to evacuate the people. "We started taking showers then," _____ said. _____ said there was no panic although "Some were frightened. By night children were crying. Many (adults) were sick," It was about 7 some days after the exposure that some natives began losing their hair. I saw several who had. Nearly all of them were getting their hair back. One fellow wore a red and white baseball cap continuously. _____, a Marshallese nurse from Majuro who was acting as interpreter, confided: "He lost all his hair." Asked how his people felt about their experience, _____ paused and then very solemnly replied: "There is anger among some people. I think it will disappear if we get back home. They trust the American people. I like American people." The Rongelap leader said that his people had been well taken care of since their arrival. They have had all the food, clothing, medical care and entertainment they need. Jabwe at this point said, "I want to thank the Americans for the immediate care they gave us."

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Nurse said "Almost all the people are cured." I did see one man 39-year-old ' who still had a bad radioactive burn on the back of his right ear. It was a livid red. He said it "burned and itched" continuously. Tima was fishing in a canoe when the fall-out occurred. Thirteen Rongelap men left yesterday aboard an LST with the Utirik people. They will go to Rongelap to recover some possessions left behind. The first will return to Kwajalein and then the LST will return to Kwajalein and then take the entire group to Ejit. I asked the and his group if there was any message he or any of his people would like to send to the American people. Anjin thought for a long time and said no. But 38-year-old ' spoke up in Marshallese and said: "Please tell them not to do the same thing again -- throw the bomb. We didn't do anything wrong. We didn't hurt them." As I got up to leave, each of the natives present came over and shook hands.

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Majuro, Marshall Islands, May 29 (AP) - Two Marshallese school teachers were the chief drafters of a petition to the UN complaining about hydrogen bomb experiments in their homeland. The pair, Dwight Heine and Atlan Anjen, emphatically deny any American knowingly assisted them. "Some did help but they did not know it," Heine said in an interview. "We asked many questions of Americans. We asked who one would write to and how it would be addressed but we did not tell them what we were going to do. We also read UN pamphlets and saw how petitions appearing in them were worded." Heine said two Americans saw an early draft of the petition but it carried no heading. He said one, Keith Smith, American manager for Marshallese Trading Company, said "Who wrote it? It is beautifully written." "It taxed me and Atlan to write it," Heine continued. "We worked every day for nearly a month. We would meet with other Marshallese and put down their ideas. Then we would make a rough draft. I thought we had too many dangers in it. So I looked through the dictionary and decided on lethal. I also found word circumvent as a substitute for prevent." Heine, whose grandfather was German, is bigger than most Marshallese. He is 35 years old, has dark skin and bushy hair. He is superintendent of the Marshall Island schools.

Heine probably is one of the best educated Marshallese. He is the spokesman between the people and Americans. Heine started school in 1928 at the Protestant Jesuit Mission School. In 1936 he went to a mission junior high at Kusaie. When the Americans moved into the Marshalls during World War II he worked for the U.S. Navy as a guide and interpreter. Between 1948 and 1950 he attended the University of Hawaii in Honolulu. Last year he travelled for 3 months in New Zealand, Samoa and Fiji on a UNESCO fellowship.

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Heine has a sense of humor and timing. He told this story of an American Congressman who visited Majuro and spoke to the people. He related: "I was interpreting. The Congressman threw his arms out and said we are a Christian people. You are a Christian people. We want to save the world from Communism. We do not want you people to slip behind the Iron Curtain." When I said Iron Curtain the Marshallese looked at each and whispered Iron Curtain. What is that I was really stuck for explaining it. The word Communism means nothing to the people. I now use the word Russia for Communism. "For instance during your Smith Act trials I'd say Russia explain that these people were trying to steal secrets from American and give them to Russia."

Present with Heine and Amos were Kabuakabua, district judge and president of the House of IROJI, and Doro Sykabua, Queen of the Majuro Atoll and member of the House of IROJI. They gave the impression that they were as concerned over the loss of land as they were about the hydrogen tests. Dorothy Kabua, 55-year-old mother of 4 sons, is a daughter-in-law of a late chief of the Bikini people. Heine said that the Bikini people had never been paid for the Lagoon. Asked how much she would estimate the Lagoon was worth, Dorothy Kabua replied in Marshallese. Heine tried to give a literal reply. She said, "Hard estimate. Islands grow coconuts, bread fruit. The reef has fish. The island home for birds. Money spent use up gone. Lagoon gives many, many years life." Dorothy Kabua went to the U.N. last year. She is a short stocky woman, wears glasses and at the time I was talking to her was wearing a light print dress. Asked of her trip to New York she said she went to a 3-D movie. "It was a picture of a boat. It looked like it was coming out on us. It bounced up and down so much I got seasick and had to leave," she

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related and then laughed heartily.

Heine, whose parents and grandparents were killed by the Japanese, said "We (Marshallese) like the Americans. We petitioned Congress with 2,000 names to have you (U.S.) stay here." If Heine or his fnnati wordecs have any regret about the petition sent to the U.N. it is that it might bommerang and hurt the trust territory people. "There was a reason we did not have Americans in on the petition. They are very nice. We did not want them to get in trouble," he explained. Later Heine came to me and said: "We want Mr. (Maynard) Neas (Acting District Administrator) to be District Administrator. If in any way our petition implies lack of confidence in him or the Trust Territory Government say that it is not not so." Heine said that "Everyone (Americans in the Marshalls) sympathize with us. They felt a responsibility for what happened." That is the concensus of what I found in talking to the Americans on the island. Neas, in commenting on the accident, said: "I believe officials of the nuclear tests should have given adequate and timely information to the natives so they could protect themselves. To my knowledge this was not done."

Bob L. Omis, missionary for the American Board of Commissioners of Foreign Mission, Boston, is on Majuro translating the Bible for the deeply religious Marshallese. He made this comment on the petition: "I think I approve it. Dwight (Heine) is smart. It was a sensible way to handle it as it did not involve (U.S.) Government people. It will help the people here get national consciousness." Doctor Dunham Kirkham of Avoca, New York, a former Army doctor and now the Trust Territory doctor for the Marshall Islands, said of the incident: "It's tough on these people. They seem a little distrustful of our promises. They are thinking of Bikini." Another Trust Territory

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official who asked that his name not be used said "They're taking a damn dim view of being yanked from one island to another." There seemed to be some concern among the Americans that they too had been kept in the dark about the explosions. One woman said that nearly every American received inquiries about their welfare after announcement of the explosion. She said her son wrote: "What's going on out there? I don't want radioactive parents."