

RG 374 DEFENSE NAVAL AGENCY

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9 APR 1954 *R*

SUBJECT: Return of Inhabitants of Rongelap and Utrik to their Home Atolls

TO: Commander in Chief, Pacific  
o/o Fleet Post Office  
San Francisco, California

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1. In accordance with CINCPAC Secret letter, serial 6024, dated 13 January 1954, it is the responsibility of CJTF 7 to advise CINCPAC of special hazards involved in the CASTLE tests and appropriate precautions required to insure safety of inhabited islands within the purview of the Pacific Command, other than Joint Task Force SEVEN. Prior to the first detonation of Operation CASTLE it was not anticipated that evacuation of any atoll would be required. When it became known that Rongelap and Utrik had become radiologically contaminated, time did not permit notification of CINCPAC and employment of CINCPAC forces for the evacuation. Commander Joint Task Force SEVEN, having the only available means for an immediate evacuation, accomplished the evacuation with task force ships and delivered the inhabitants to Naval Station Kwajalein. Since the evacuation the Commander, Naval Station Kwajalein has furnished housing, subsistence and medical care for these personnel. CJTF 7 has rendered all possible assistance.

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2. It is assumed by CJTF 7 that CINCPAC will assume responsibility for the return of the inhabitants of these atolls to their homes when such action becomes possible. Prior to their return, certain actions will be required to insure that their normal way of life can be resumed. In planning such action, the following factors should be considered:

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a. Inhabitants of these two atolls cannot be returned to their homes until Operation CASTLE is concluded. The Utrik inhabitants, as far as radiological and health conditions are concerned, can be returned immediately after any possible danger from the last CASTLE detonation is passed. The inhabitants of Rongelap will require further medical observation and the atoll will require further survey before a definite date of return can be determined.

b. Livestock and personal property such as copra, rice, flour, etc., which has been damaged or destroyed should be replaced. It is possible that arrangements can be made to have this accomplished by HICOMTERPACIS. Some of the animals of both atolls have been sent to laboratories in the U.S. for scientific study. It will probably be necessary to destroy livestock remaining on

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NO DOE CLASS. INFO COORDINATE

*12/12/89*

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CLASSIFICATION CANCELLED BY AUTHORITY OF DOD/OC  
*8/28/90*  
LTCR DNR SWISHER TO  
FOR 85-50, 5-14-90

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Rongelap. Livestock remaining on Utrik will probably not need to be destroyed.

c. Examination will have to be made of the atolls' water supply. Cisterns will either have to be made radiologically clean or replaced and filled with fresh water.

d. This command is presently engaged in determining the future edibility of fish, coconuts, pandanus, and other vegetation which is used for food. The results of these studies will be made available as soon as they are known.

e. Surveys of houses, sleeping mats, etc., will have to be made to determine the degree of retained radiological contamination, if any. Areas found to be radiologically unsafe will have to be decontaminated. Houses, if any, found unsuitable for further occupancy will have to be replaced prior to re-entry.

3. The above are considered only primary planning factors. It is recommended that a survey of these atolls be conducted by CINCPAC in the near future to determine the action to be taken prior to and during the re-entry of the inhabitants. A survey composed of at least the following personnel would appear to be indicated:

<u>PERSONNEL</u>	<u>AGENCY REPRESENTATIVE</u>	<b>DNA</b>
Officer in charge	CINCPAC	
JTF 7 Representative	JTF 7	
Trust Territory Representative	HIICONTERRACYS	
Magistrates from the two atolls	Local inhabitants	
Sanitary Engineer	It is suggested that this individual be furnished by the AEC construction contractor at the Proving Ground (Holmes & Narver)	
Health safety and Rad-safe monitor	JTF 7	

The report and recommendation of this group should include all phases of rehabilitation, including purchase and transportation of animals and transportation of personnel to the atolls.

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4. It is suggested that the PC 1546, now assigned to the Navy Task Group, 7.3, would be a suitable ship for the survey party to use since it can enter both atolls. A DUE cannot enter Utrik Atoll.

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5. The planned termination date for Operation CASTLE could be as early as 15 May but might be later.

6. CJTF-7 desires to assist in any way practicable. However, it is anticipated that within 15 days after the completion of CASTLE, all forces except the permanent Eniwetok Garrison will be released and will depart from the Proving Grounds.

7. Funds to defer expenses, other than normal service support, will be provided by CJTF-7.

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F. Y. CLAYSON  
Major General, USA  
Commander

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