

NATIONAL SECURITY COUNCIL

August 1, 1968

NOTE FOR MR. SCHWARTZ

Lou --

Here are two items relating to the "Return to Bikini" project. One, the Interior Department package and two, a draft statement that the AEC proposes to issue after the White House announcement has been made.

I think the Interior Department package is complete. It could be released in toto minus the classified cover memorandum and also minus the letter to the High Commissioner.

I will be away from the office this afternoon, but you will be able to reach me at home (WO 6-8204) after 6:30.


Charles E. Johnson

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Brom - The latest on this is:

- ① George Christian agrees with WH announcement, if President approves
- ② Chuck Johnson is in process of preparing a complete memo to Haidt. August 2, 1968 for your signature. 13
- ③ George C. strongly suggests any memo to Pres be also sent (in copy) to George at Austin and to Jim Jones at the Ranch.

Announced 8/12

MEMORANDUM FOR THE PRESIDENT

SUBJECT: Return of the Bikini People

Attached is a classified memorandum from Secretary Udall transmitting an unclassified memorandum urging that you announce a governmental decision that the people of Bikini can now be safely relocated ^{to} on their home island. The Secretary also proposes a draft White House announcement for this purpose and draft memoranda for your signature to the Secretary of Defense, the AEC and the BoB directing them to carry out the resettlement.

Lou S.
8/2/68

Secretary Udall's recommendation is strongly endorsed by the Secretaries of Defense and State and ^{was} also concurred in by Walt Rostow before he went on leave. Although the number of people involved is small, there is great interest in this matter at the United Nations and out in the Trust Territory itself. High Commissioner Norwood has been working on this project with the ^{AEC and the} military authorities involved and has been strongly urging its approval at the earliest possible date.

Those who have reviewed this matter feel that a White House announcement would give much greater visibility to this symbolic act of peace, and it is anticipated that there will be a generally favorable reaction to the announcement in free Asia and in all the LDCs.

If you approve a White House announcement, the materials are ready for release at the ranch. Questions and answers and maps have been provided the ^{P Office} press ~~team~~ and a member of the NSC staff and Mr. Milner, Deputy Director of the ^{Indian Department} Office of Territories ~~in Interior~~, are available to assist in briefing the White House press corps if this is thought desirable.

Bromley Smith

Enclosure

Statement Received by Telephone from Mr. Joseph Sisco, Assistant Secretary of State for International Organization Affairs

The United Nations Secretariat this morning circulated as official UN document available to all members the report of the World Health Organization investigation of medical conditions in the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands, which was requested last spring by the Trusteeship Council after a petition was received from the Territory alleging various deficiencies in medical practices. The U. S. supported the proposal for an impartial investigation. The UN document is public and is available to the press.

The U. S. Mission to the UN has issued a press statement in response to the report. We will be prepared with more detailed response when the Trusteeship Council meets, presumably at its next regular session in May, although there is an outside chance that the Soviet Union may seek an earlier meeting.

The Department of the Interior will be seeking legislation to permit a substantial increase in appropriations for the Trust Territory with particular attention to improving medical services. It is also seeking a means by which to improve the training of the native medical personnel upon whose skills the success of the local medical services depends to a considerable degree. State, Defense and Interior will also meet with a view to producing recommendations designed to advance our policies in the Trust Territory.