



UNITED STATES
ATOMIC ENERGY COMMISSION
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20545

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MAY 1 1964

Mr. Ataji L. Bales
Ebeye Village
Ewjaelein Atoll
Marshall Islands

Dear Mr. Bales:

Your letter of April 13, 1964, to the President of the United States has been referred to me for reply.

Dr. Robert Conard, Brookhaven National Laboratory, Long Island, New York, who has just returned from his yearly visit to the Islands and believes he knows you, has advised my staff that with one exception there are no restrictions on what the people of Rongelap may eat because of radioactive contamination. I understand that the people of Rongelap have been advised not to eat coconut crabs.

As you probably know, the United States, in August of 1963, signed a limited nuclear test ban treaty with many other nations, which prohibits nuclear testing in the atmosphere. Thus it is clear that the United States has no present intention of conducting any tests of nuclear weapons in the Marshall Islands.

You may be interested in knowing that the United States Congress is considering several bills in connection with the Marshallese people. A bill, H. R. 1988, to compensate inhabitants of the Rongelap Atoll for radiation exposures sustained by them as a result of a thermonuclear detonation at Bikini Atoll on March 1, 1954, passed the House of Representatives on April 1, 1963, and has been referred to the Senate for consideration. Another bill, H. R. 2072, to assure payment of just compensation for the use and occupancy of certain lands in Ewjaelein and Dalap Islands by the United States on or before April 1, 1946, passed the House of Representatives on May 6, 1963. This bill is also in the Senate for consideration. As you know, these bills do not become law, however, until they are passed by the House of Representatives and the Senate and are signed by the President.

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Mr. Ataji L. Bales

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On behalf of the President, I would like to thank you for your invitation to him to visit the Marshall Islands. In the event that you desire any further information regarding native foodstuffs both grown on land and from the sea, please write to Dr. Conard. He has advised us that he would be most happy to provide additional information. If I can be of further assistance to you in this matter, please let me know.

Sincerely yours,

General Manager

Department of Energy
Historian's Office
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