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FROM : AMLEGATION, REYKJAVIK.
TO : THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE, WASHINGTON.
REF : Legation's Secret Telegram 85, Nov. 24, 1951.

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SUBJECT: FIRST ICELANDIC REACTION TO SENATOR JOHNSON'S STATEMENT ON ATOMIC BASES.

The statement of Senator Edwin Johnson that atomic bases should be established in Iceland, North Africa and Turkey and not in England has been picked up by the local Communist press. The daily THJODVILJINN published the story on the first page on November 25, 1951, quoting a Reuters news despatch. (See enclosure). No editorial comment has appeared as yet. THJODVILJINN stated that, due to the pressure of the British people, Churchill had promised to negotiate with the United States for the transfer of these bases, and the article assumed that the United States is considering the possibility of moving the bases to Iceland. THJODVILJINN concluded that Americans feel that it does not matter if Iceland should be subjected to the attack and horrors which such bases would bring upon the nation.

A spokesman at the Foreign Office said informally that as yet no mention of the article has been heard from Icelanders.

Morris N. Hughes
Charge d'Affaires ad interim

Enclosure: *att*

Unofficial translation of article appearing in the Communist daily THJODVILJINN.

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UNOFFICIAL TRANSLATION OF AN ARTICLE APPEARING IN THE COMMUNIST DAILY THJODVILJINN, NOVEMBER 25, 1951, PAGE 1, COLUMN 2-5.

WILL THE AMERICAN ATOM BASES BE TRANSFERRED TO ICELAND?
A MEMBER OF THE ATOMIC ENERGY COMMITTEE OF THE U.S. CONGRESS SAYS IT IS IMPOSSIBLE TO SUBJECT BRITAIN TO THE HORRORS OF ATOMIC WARFARE. CONSIDERS THAT THE BASES WOULD BE BETTER PLACED IN ICELAND.

A Reuter's report from Washington dated the 12th of November, which has been carried by many foreign newspapers, says:

"At a press conference today the Democratic Senator Edwin Johnson declared that the United States should discard its atom bases in Britain, as they would be much better placed elsewhere, in Iceland, North Africa and Turkey, for example.

He concluded by saying that there was no excuse for subjecting Britain to the danger of enemy attack.

Senator Johnson is a member of the Atomic Energy Committee of the U.S. Congress."

MORGUNBLADID seems to have been of the opinion that it would not be beneficial for the Icelanders to see this report, as one would hardly expect a Reuter's report which concerns Iceland to escape its attention. Not least because the person involved is a member of the innermost U.S. preparations for an atom war, and who has more than once before reported on atomic energy issues which were to have been kept secret.

A movement to rid Britain of the U.S. atom bases, because they subject the British nation to tremendous danger, has been growing in intensity. This movement has become so powerful that Churchill has had to pay attention to it and has promised to try to negotiate the transfer of these bases from Britain by the United States.

The comments made by the American statesman indicate that the U.S. Government is considering the possibility of meeting this "request" by moving their atom bases to Iceland. His comments reveal that the Americans do not think there is much at stake, even if Iceland were subjected to the attacks and horrors which such bases would bring upon the Icelandic nation.