O'Rourke & Associates
Filmmakers
Australia

(A title introduces Albert Einstein)

Albert Einstein
1879 - 1955
A film by
Dennis O'Rourke

(The main title comes in two frames)

HALF LIFE
… a parable for
the nuclear age …

Title:

Part one …… Causes
About two thousand miles southwest of Hawaii there is a cluster of tiny coral atolls called the Marshall Islands.

The United States took these islands from Japan during the Pacific War.

In 1947 the United Nations placed the Marshall Islands under the protection of America.
The Trusteeship Agreement stated that the United States was required to: "Recognize the principle that the interests of the inhabitants are paramount ..." and to "... protect their rights and fundamental freedoms."

Instead, the United States used the Marshall Islands as a testing ground for its new atomic weapons.
The first tests were held on Bikini Atoll. The people living there, and on the atolls downwind, were removed from their traditional homeland.

During the next decade the U.S. Atomic Energy Commission (A.E.C.) exploded at least sixty six nuclear bombs on these islands, contaminating them for centuries to come.
Today, the United States is in the process of terminating the Trusteeship Agreement.

In Washington, officials and members of the U.S. Congress are debating the amount of compensation to be given to the Marshall Islanders.