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UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

Memorandum

TO : John R. Totter, Director
Division of Biology and Medicine

DATE: FEB 15 1968

FROM : Martin B. Biles, Director
Division of Operational Safety

M.B. Biles

With attachments
CONFIRMED TO BE UNCLASSIFIED
AUTHORITY: DOE/SA-20

SUBJECT: DELIBERATIONS ON RESETTLEMENT OF BIKINI ATOLL

BY H.R. SCHMIDT, DATE:
D.R. GILSON 6-16-94

White

OS:NEES:TFM

Staff of the Division of Operational Safety (OS) earlier agreed to assist in obtaining a decision on the question of resettlement of Bikini Atoll. The logical next step would appear to be a briefing on progress to date and a concentrated effort to bring about recommendations that can be used to prepare a reply to Secretary Udall's request.

The attached draft memorandum and tentative agenda are a first effort at planning a series of meetings over a period of several days to bring together the experts who can assist in defining the radiological situation in Bikini Atoll as determined by past surveys. A further aim is to put this situation into perspective for the attendees through comparisons with conditions of resettlement of Rongelap, natural background radiation exposures, exposures from past atmospheric testing, and established guides. Another important consideration regarding perspective is input from the Trust Territory anthropologist and agriculturist. In our opinion, these two individuals, because of their unique background and experience, should participate in the briefing and attend the deliberative phases of the meeting.

It is obvious that through this approach we are suggesting a considerable cooperative effort by a number of individuals in a short time period. Nevertheless, we believe this to be a more desirable procedure for developing an AEC position than prolonged deliberations. Should the Department of Interior choose to submit this question to a wider cross section of scientific opinion, they could do so. We have kept the Federal Radiation Council (FRC) staff informed of our activities, and they have been alerted to the possibility that AEC or the Department of Interior may require their assistance.

Although the job that remains to be done has been discussed with some who have a major role as shown by the draft agenda, these contacts have been incomplete and informal, and an agreement for the cooperation and assistance of each has not yet been obtained. As a first estimate, we would propose that exposure estimates similar to those developed for FRC Report No. 4 by OS and HM staff be prepared for the Bikini situation

From NMB-K

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using the collected data. Mr. Tommy F. McCraw, OS, and Dr. Philip F. Gustafson, BM, have discussed this. If there is need for additional estimates, these can be prepared during the 3-day period. The OS staff will be available to consider such arrangements more fully along with the question of whether this or some other approach is best.

Attachments: (2)

1. Draft memo to Those Listed fm
J. R. Totter
2. Tentative Agenda for Deliberations on
Resettlement of Bikini Atoll

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Draft
TFMcCraw:rw
February 13, 1968

Those listed below (Addressees to be decided)

John R. Totter, Director
Division of Biology and Medicine

DELIBERATIONS ON RESETTLEMENT OF BIKINI ATOLL

OS:NEES:TFM

From NMB-K

Those who attended will recall the meeting convened on January 24, 1967, to consider the available information on radiation levels on Bikini Atoll. Information that would be required to make a decision on whether or not it would be safe to return the Bikini natives to their home atoll was reviewed. At that meeting, we determined that available data were not complete. Plans were outlined for a resurvey of the Atoll. A primary part of this resurvey would be a comprehensive external radiation survey.

A team headed by Dr. Edward Held spent a total of 16 working days on the Atoll in April-May 1967. The reports from this group are now available.

We believe that data are now available for further consideration of the primary resettlement question. The next step is to convene a meeting of the principles, along with several others who are experts on dosimetry, to discuss the resurvey effort and to review the information in (1) the HASL report on external radiation levels, (2) the reports on soils and other collected samples analyzed for radionuclides, (3) the report of the agricultural expert of the Trust Territory, and (4) the

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Those listed

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report of the anthropologist from the Trust Territory. These data, plus those obtained during the 1964 survey, should form an adequate basis for an assessment of the radiological situation in the Atoll.

To shorten the time required for decision making and to minimize the expenditure of travel funds, we foresee the need for recurrent meetings of key individuals over a 3 to 4-day period to consider matters such as exposure estimates for a variety of assumed conditions or guidance on the better of several alternatives and conditions for resettlement. This would also provide us opportunity to consult with outside experts, such as staff of the Federal Radiation Council (FRC). We would expect that recommendations could be developed on the question of resettlement from a radiation safety viewpoint. These recommendations will be considered in preparing an AEC reply to the Secretary of Interior.

It has been suggested that we meet three days at the AEC office in Germantown. Staff of the Divisions of Biology and Medicine and Operational Safety are proceeding on the basis that this schedule can be met. As plans for the meeting are completed, you will be provided any additional information. A copy of a tentative agenda is attached. It undoubtedly contains gaps, but these can be filled before the meetings.

Please notify us whether you or an alternate can attend.

Attachment:
Tentative Agenda for Deliberations on
Resettlement of Bikini Atoll

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TENTATIVE AGENDA FOR DELIBERATIONS
ON
RESETTLEMENT OF BIKINI ATOLL

Monday, February 26, 1968

Briefings

- | | |
|---|---|
| 1. Summary of the field work during the 1967 resurvey. | Dr. Edward Held
University of Washington |
| 2. Review of external radiation measurements and observations of contaminated debris. | Mr. Harold Beck
HASL |
| 3. Review of soils data for 1964 and 1967 surveys. | Dr. Edward Held
University of Washington |
| 4. Review of data on plants, fish, and other food samples for 1964 and 1967 surveys. | Dr. Edward Held
University of Washington |
| 5. Review of data on birds for 1964 and 1967 surveys. | Mr. Arnold Joseph
Marine Sciences Inst. |
| 6. Review of anthropological information. Living patterns, dietary patterns, and probable use for various islands in the Atoll. | Mr. Jack Tobin
Trust Territory |
| 7. Review of agricultural information. Present situation and future potential. | Mr. James Hiyane
Trust Territory |
| 8. Discussion of preliminary total exposure estimates for Bikini Atoll. | |
| External contribution. | Mr. Tommy McCraw
AEC/OS |
| Internal contribution and predicted body burdens for biologically significant radionuclides. | Dr. Philip Gustafson
AEC/EM

Dr. Joseph Rivera
HASL |

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9. Comparison of total exposure estimates with radiation protection guides.

Mr. Claire Palmiter
FRC

Group Discussion (Chairman - to be named)

1. Questioning of team members.
2. Consideration of the adequacy of available data.
3. Discussion on any additional exposure estimates that are needed.^{1/}

Tuesday, February 27, 1968

Briefings (continued)

1. Discussion on the political, social, and economic aspects of resettlement and the possible impact of a decision to return or not to return the Bikini people to their home island.
2. The mechanics of resettlement and agricultural redevelopment, expected logistical requirements, and possible cost of resettlement.
3. International considerations for pro and con decisions on return home by Bikini people.
4. The resettlement of Rongelap Atoll, the radiation environment at time of resettlement, and the exposure history of those who were returned. The observed body radionuclide content before and after resettlement.

Mr. Jack Tobin
Trust Territory

Mr. James Hiyane
Trust Territory

Mr. William Yoemans
AEC/IA

Dr. Robert Conard
BNL

^{1/}Participants from HASL, FRC, BM, OS, and others may be asked to form a task group to develop these estimates for use in subsequent deliberations.

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| 5. A review of the natural radiation environment in the U. S. and range of exposure levels. | Mr. Harold Beck
HASL |
| 6. Review of FRC estimates on exposures of the U. S. population from past atmospheric tests. | Mr. Tommy McCraw
AEC/OS |
| 7. Feedback from any earlier requirement for additional exposure estimates. | To be named |

Wednesday, February 28, 1968

Group Deliberations (Chairman - to be named)

1. Brief summarizing of the material reviewed so far for Bikini Atoll and the Bikini people. To be named

2. Consideration of the following:
 - a. Is there a reason, from a radiation exposure viewpoint, why the Bikini natives should not return to their home Atoll?

 - b. If there is reason not to return, what is needed to make the Atoll acceptable for return of Bikini people,
or
if the Bikini people may return, what, if any, conditions must be set for their return from a radiation viewpoint?

3. Following discussion on the above, it is expected that opinions will have been formed on the key question of resettlement. At this point, it has been suggested that a roundtable discussion be held to arrive at final recommendations for use by EM and OS. Those listed below are asked to participate or to appoint an alternate member:

Dr. John Harley, HASL - Chairman	
Dr. Robert Conard, BNL	Dr. Roy Maxwell, OS
Dr. Paul Tompkins, FRC	Dr. David Bruner, EM
Mr. Robert Catlin, OS	Dr. Allan Lough, EM

Note: Output from the roundtable discussion should be a list of recommendations on the question of resettlement of Bikini Atoll.

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