

BROOKHAVEN NATIONAL LABORATORY
M E M O R A N D U M

DATE: April 14, 1980

TO: V. P. Bond

FROM: J. Naidu, N. Greenhouse

SUBJECT: Public Law 96-205 Research Proposals

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Public Law 96-205, which was enacted on March 12, 1980 requires, as one of its mandates, that DOE come up with an educational program for the Marshallese on radiation and its effects. The program, when carried out, should help the Marshallese to understand nuclear radiation and in doing so, assure themselves that their unrealistic fears will be minimized and that the measures aimed at reducing radiation exposure will be effective. In view of this mandate, it is felt that BNL should draw up a comprehensive program on education on radiation and its effects for the Marshallese. It is also felt that BNL should be the lead laboratory in this educational effort since it was BNL that instituted the first educational program on this subject. To supplement this statement, a brief history of our past educational efforts is outlined below:

It was during the Sept. '76 survey trip to Rongelap that Dr. Knudsen was approached by the people of Rongelap with the request as to whether it was possible for someone from BNL to stay on the island and talk to them about radiation. Being culturally close to them, Dr. Jan Naidu seemed to be the most likely candidate and indeed a direct request was made by the people of Rongelap for Dr. Naidu's return. As a result of this request, the Medical Department and S&EP Division petitioned Dr. Weyzen to fund the educational effort and in January 1977, Dr. Naidu proceeded to Rongelap. Six weeks were spent on Rongelap. Senator Ataji Balos of the Congress of Micronesia was made aware of this program and soon a request was received from Utirik for a similar program on their island. Senator Balos was also informed. Very soon, it came to be known all over the Marshalls that we had conducted an educational program in Rongelap and Utirik on radiation. The visit to Utirik was made in April/May 1978. At that time, Dr. Naidu had the opportunity to meet the High Commissioner, Mr. Adrian Winkel in Majuro and he was apprised of our efforts. Also at this meeting, Mr. Oscar DeBrum and Mr. Roger Ray were present. Actually, Mr. Winkel and Mr. DeBrum wondered whether such programs could be extended to their own staff. Mr. Amata Kubua indicated to us at that time that he was aware of our program and commended us on our efforts. Summaries of the lectures were sent to Mr. Winkel, Mr. DeBrum and to DOE Headquarters. A letter was also sent to Dr. Burr (DOE) in February 1978 outlining the educational program. The educational effort was also discussed at the first Marshall Islands contractor's meeting held at Livermore during June 1977 at which time, Mr. Roger Ray remarked that the effort was indeed humanitarian. Two papers on our educational program were presented at the Health Physics Society meetings in July 1979 and December 1979. It was also noted that when Mr. Ataj Balos visited BNL in June 1979, he was hoping that we would continue our educational effort in the Marshalls.

April 14, 1980

It is clear that BNL has recognized the need and demonstrated the capability of developing an educational program and presenting the same to the Marshallese. It is therefore felt that BNL should be given the opportunity to continue its role in this area of radiation education.

Another area which is an outgrowth of the educational program is our efforts to develop a diet and lifestyle for the Marshallese. Since our educational program required living with Marshallese, it was possible for us to observe on a first hand basis their diet and living patterns. Since 1974, this Laboratory has had its staff spend months to years living with the Marshallese and in doing so developed a working protocol for deriving information on the diet and living patterns. A report of our findings is under preparation and a draft of the same will be available for review during April/May 1980. It is felt that a separate effort to evaluate diet and living patterns would not be cost effective since we feel that such data could be gathered while presenting the educational program. The confidence and trust generated through the educational program will certainly enhance the quality of data on diet and lifestyle. This is important since dose estimates that are also required by the same law would be based on the quantitative understanding of diet and living patterns.

In view of the role that BNL has played in the Marshall Islands program, in the past and continuing to do so in the present, we feel that the Medical Department and the S&EP Division should be given the opportunity to draw up a proposal specifically addressing the Public Law requirement of an educational program in the field of radiation from nuclear fallout. We seek your guidance in exploring the possibility of doing so.

JRN:NAG/slg

cc: C. B. Meinhold
A. P. Hull
H. S. Pratt
D. C. Borg

5006400