

MID-PACIFIC MARINE LABORATORY  
ENEWETAK ATOLL, MARSHALL ISLANDS

401279

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UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY

MEMORANDUM

February 16, 1979

To: J. Caperon, W. Coops, P. Helfrich, V. Johnson,  
R. Ray, W. Stanley

From: Ernst S. Reese, Director *Ernst Reese*

Subject: THE FUTURE OF MPML

This memorandum is a position statement on my thinking about the future of MPML. It is addressed to you because you are the people in the Department of Energy and the University of Hawaii most closely associated with MPML. Since the ideas expressed are tentative, I suggest we keep them confidential.

Although Vic Johnson and I are preparing the proposal for fiscal years 1980-1981, and rewritten portions of the proposal will outline the implementation of many of the suggestions made at the workshop, I now question, for the first time, whether in fact we should devote more time, energy, and money to planning for the future operation of MPML after mid-1980.

I came away from the workshop with the feeling that we will get very little support in Washington even if we implement the changes that were suggested. The overall conclusion must be that there is little DOE need for MPML. I believe the statements made by Drs. Buddemeier, Noshkin and Robison emphatically underline that conclusion. I consider the remarks made by Dr. Buddemeier to be especially damaging and unjustified, not alone with respect to MPML but to the University's research program as well.

Given the attitudes expressed at the workshop, it may not be wise to pursue our present course of action. Perhaps, instead, we should begin a gradual phase-out of the laboratory to coincide with the completion date of Operation Clean-up.

An alternative decision would be to mount a full scale effort to continue the laboratory with or without DOE support. This is a decision which must be made by the research leadership of the University of Hawaii. It will take an energetic person, loyal to the University, dedicated to insuring that the kinds of research which can best be done at Enewetak continue, and able to devote nearly full time to the task.


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Originally I had planned to stay with the job through the transition period, but it may be best for me to step aside at the end of this fiscal year or perhaps even sooner should the decision be made to make a major effort to seek funds from a variety of sources to insure the future of the laboratory. These decisions must be reached very soon as Vic Johnson hopes to find a teaching position by fall of this year.

I suggest that those of us in the University schedule a meeting within the next week to discuss our position and then meet with Roger Ray and Bill Stanley the next time Roger is in Honolulu.

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