



United States Department of the Interior

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20240

APR 11 1978

Dr. William W. Burr
Deputy Director
Division of Biomedical and
Environmental Research
Department of Energy
Washington, D.C. 20545

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Dear Dr. Burr:

I am enclosing for your information a copy of a March 28, 1978, letter from High Commissioner Adrian P. Winkel dealing with matters which appear to have created problems in the administration of Section 104 of P.L. 95-134. As you know, this section deals with compensation to the inhabitants of Rongelap and Utirik Atolls for radiation exposure sustained by them as a result of thermonuclear detonation at Bikini Atoll on March 1, 1954.

The Assistant Attorney General of the Trust Territory who has made a preliminary survey in the Marshall Islands on this matter has expressed the opinion that due to difficulties found within the language of the act, payment cannot be properly administered until clarification is received or the act is amended. I am now having the comments analyzed. Although most will not involve your agency, several problems dealing with the medical aspects have been raised.

I think we should have a meeting soon to discuss the ramifications of the act and the recommendations of the High Commissioner. I understand that Mr. John E. deYoung of my staff will make arrangements for a conference at a later date. In the meanwhile, I would appreciate your comments on the medical aspects touched on in the High Commissioner's letter.

Sincerely yours,

MRS. RUTH G. VAN CLEVE

Mrs. Ruth G. Van Cleve
Director
Office of Territorial Affairs

Enclosure

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