

DEWEY, ROSS & MERRILL  
ATTORNEYS AT LAW  
5408 SEPULVEDA BOULEVARD  
CULVER CITY, CALIFORNIA 90230

*de Young*

RONALD G. BAKAL  
JOBY ALTAGEN BAKAL

401705

TELEPHONE  
(213) 390-7860

November 15, 1976

Fred M. Zeder  
U.S. Dept. of the Interior Rm 4312  
Washington D.C. 20240

Re: Our Client: People of Utirik Atoll, Marshall Islands  
Negligence - March 1, 1954

Dear Sir:

This office has been retained by the People of Utirik Atoll, Marshall Islands, United Nations Trusteeship, to seek compensation on their behalf for damages they have suffered as a result of the negligence of the United States Government in the detonation of a nuclear device on March 1, 1954.

For the last 22 years our clients have suffered from the effects of their exposure to radiation with only token compensation and periodic medical treatment which can only be described as experimentation. Along with the high degree of thyroid tumors, including malignancy, among the exposed population, evidence has been detected that second generation children are being genetically afflicted. Besides the direct physical damage, the entire population of the atoll suffers from the emotional and psychological effects of the expectation of continuing health problems. Your agency should be well aware of the environmental impact the radiation has had upon the flora and fauna of Utirik Atoll. Now that the former residents of Bikini Atoll have been compensated for their property losses by Congressional action, it is time that the people of Utirik Atoll shall be compensated for the loss of life, continuing diseases, threat of disease, altered environment and the humiliation of being treated as human guinea pigs.

There are still 40 persons alive in the exposed group living on the Atoll. This office now demands that each and every member of that group be compensated in the sum of One Million Dollars (\$1,000,000.00) for physical and psychological injury. Further demand is made on behalf of all other inhabitants of the Atoll in the sum of Sixty Million Dollars (\$60,000,000.00) for psychological, emotional and environmental damages.

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DETECTIVE FIRM DANIEL  
ATTORNEYS AT LAW  
5408 SEPULVEDA BOULEVARD  
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This office has in its possession a large amount of documentation supporting the negligence involved in the March 1, 1954 detonation which has caused the damages, as well as documentation supporting the extent of these damages. We feel confident that your agency has access to most, if not all, of this material, since most are the results of studies sponsored by the United States Energy Research and Development Administration, formerly known as the Atomic Energy Commission.

Our clients are continuing to suffer disease and loss of life and land use as a result of this incident. In fact, the U. S. Energy Research and Development Administration has cancelled a December, 1976 medical survey expedition to the Atoll as a direct result of our clients demand for compensation. This office urges that such a survey be conducted immediately and that our clients not suffer further as a result of their efforts to seek redress for the wrongs they have suffered.

This office will pursue our clients' claims to every level of National and International administration. We feel that the precedent of the people of the Bikini Atoll should now be applied to the bodily and psychological injuries of our clients.

This office will be happy to furnish any information regarding our clients' claim and expect an immediate response to our demands.

Yours truly,

  
RONALD G. BAKAL

RGB:lm  
cc:

Aplos Kios, Iroij (Chief) of Utirik Atoll  
Robert A. Conard, M.D., U.S. Energy Research and Development  
Administration  
Fred Zeder, U.S. Department of Interior  
Secretary of the Trusteeship Council, United Nations  
United Nations General Assembly  
U.S. Senator Allen Cranston  
George Ailan, Attorney at Law

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