

TRUST TERRITORY OF THE PACIFIC ISLANDS

Office of the District Administrator

Marshalls District

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in reply refer t

January 11, 1977

Dr. James Liverman
Assistant Administrator for
Environment and Safety
U.S. Energy Research and
Development Administration
Washington D.C. 20545

Dear Dr. Liverman:

Several times in recent months, I have requested assistance in understanding matters concerned with radiation and in explaining these matters to the people of our islands. I recently requested assistance also during the United Nation's Mission visit and during the visit of a United States Congress Committee under the leadership of Patsy Mink. On these occasions your Nevada Operations Office has generously provided assistance by having Mr. Roger Ray travel to the Marshalls. Mr. Ray has gained credibility for himself and for ERDA by being willing to go wherever we had a need, to listen to the people's questions and concerns and to patiently explain ERDA's actions which are so important to them.

During his visit in mid November, Mr. Ray has advised me of the plans which your staff is making for meeting here in the Marshalls to discuss ERDA's medical program at Rongelap and Utirik. I shall most certainly welcome that visit and make every effort to have representatives of both atolls available for the discussions. I would urge, too, that after we have agreement on the future of the program, your representatives would try to visit Utirik and Rongelap to explain it first-hand to the people.

I am informed also that you are planning for extensive studies regarding the presence of plutonium in the urine of the people at Bikini. That problem and the people's apprehension about it has become a matter of great concern to me. I have asked Mr. Ray to please arrange for an early visit to Bikini to explain what it may mean to the health of the people and to describe in advance the kind of tests and studies which you plan to carry out.

I understand that this may include the collection of a large quantity of urine, perhaps from almost the entire population, and over a period of time. Such program will require careful explanation and

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probably participation by one or more Marshallese. My staff will be glad to assist in planning for it.

Again let me express my appreciation for your support and for Mr. Ray's continued counsel and assistance.

Sincerely yours,



Oscar de Brum
District Administrator, Marshalls

cc : M.E. Gates, ERDA Manager
file
High Commissioner - TT Headquarters

OD/JGW:jwj