

**TRUST TERRITORY OF THE PACIFIC
ISLANDS—APPROPRIATIONS**

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HEARING
BEFORE THE
COMMITTEE ON
ENERGY AND NATURAL RESOURCES
UNITED STATES SENATE
NINETY-FIFTH CONGRESS

FIRST SESSION

ON

H.R. 6550

AN ACT TO AUTHORIZE CERTAIN APPROPRIATIONS FOR THE
TERRITORIES OF THE UNITED STATES, TO AMEND CERTAIN
ACTS RELATING THERETO, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES

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**STATEMENT OF GLENN H. ALCALAY, FORMER PEACE CORPS
VOLUNTEER, TRUST TERRITORY OF THE PACIFIC ISLANDS**

Mr. ALCALAY. I am a Peace Corps volunteer who was on ^{Utrik} Eniwetok Atoll. I have submitted a written statement I wish included in the testimony. I would just care to say I am honored to be here on behalf of these people and I ask the committee be as sympathetic as possible when considering compensation and continued medical care for these people in the context of human rights. President Carter, and his administration, are very interested in human rights.

It should be pointed out these people's human rights have been violated as a byproduct of negligence on the part of this Government. I think these people are continuing to suffer as a part of this negligence. I had a conversation with one of the doctors yesterday. He gave the estimate—it is not clear how long these people are going to suffer.

Senator METZENBAUM. Would you identify yourself.

Mr. ALCALAY. Glenn Alcalay, a former Peace Corps volunteer.

Senator METZENBAUM. Are you still on the island?

Mr. ALCALAY. No; I just returned from the Marshall Islands.

Senator METZENBAUM. We appreciate your taking the time and trouble in order to be a Peace Corps volunteer, but for the sentiments expressed and I am sure those sentiments are shared by members of this committee as well as by the administration. Unfortunately, money does not always provide answers to some of the problems, but we will try to do the best we can under the circumstances.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Alcalay follows:]

**STATEMENT OF GLENN H. ALCALAY, PEACE CORPS VOLUNTEER, TRUST TERRITORY
OF THE PACIFIC ISLANDS**

I, Glenn H. Alcalay, was a Peace Corps volunteer assigned to the Marshall Islands from the period of March 2, 1975 to May 2, 1977. I served on Utrik Atoll for two years as a cooperative advisor (vis-a-vis the Department of Agriculture in the Marshalls district), and also as a TESL (teaching English as a second language) teacher.

In the following pages I have summarized some of the major areas which I feel to be of importance in relation to the Utrik people and their ongoing problems as a consequence of having been irradiated in the incident of March 1, 1954.

I. Psychological effects of radiation on Utrikese

(a) The people of Utrik generally believe that they are living in a still-radioactive environment, despite the individual physicians' and ERDA/Brookhaven's claims to the contrary. This lack of trust stems from the doctors telling the people that "everything is alright now" in juxtaposition with an increased number of radiation-related diseases in recent years.

(b) There is a family living in Utrik (████ family) who was not residing on Utrik Atoll at the time of the incident on March 1, 1954. This family had been living on adjacent Ailuk Atoll, but did however accompany the rest of the returning Utrikese back to their atoll following their three-month forced evacuation to Kawajalein Atoll after the incident.

Since their return to Utrik in 1954, three people in this family—████, █████, and █████—have contracted thyroid tumors that required surgical removal. After having spent 2 years talking with this family on Utrik Atoll, I am convinced that this family sincerely believes their maladies to be a direct result of living on Utrik Atoll, especially since they returned with the Utrikese so soon after the incident to an environment that still contained "poison" (radiation).

PRIVACY ACT MATERIAL REMOVED

The way the Senate Bill 1192 is presently written, these people would not receive compensation because of their not having lived on Utirik Island on March 1, 1954.

(c) There is a woman named [REDACTED] who was exposed to the radiation in 1954. She expressed her fears to me that since she received "poison" (radiation), and since her children have all suckled from her breast, that now her children will have received "poison" in their bodies also, despite the fact that they didn't receive direct exposure to the radiation.

(d) During the March 1977 ERDA/Brookhaven survey, four new thyroid nodules were found in the nonexposed Utirik group. Despite flat denials by the examining physicians that these are a result of lingering radiation in Utirik, the people are convinced that these new cases are also a result of the radiation off Utirik. Whether these four new cases are indeed related to lingering radioactivity on Utirik or are merely coincidental disorders unrelated to radiation, the Utirik people think that these new cases are a result of the lingering radiation on their island.

(e) Many women I spoke with during my 2 years on Utirik expressed fears of either increased infertility or an increase in the number of stillbirths and miscarriages. Several women also expressed their fear of giving birth again to "grapes", as so many of them had done immediately following the incident in 1954, despite the fact that ERDA's physicians have continually told them not to worry about these problems.

II. Environmental effects of radiation on Utirik

(a) The people of Utirik are convinced that there are lasting effects of the radiation. The arrowroot ("mokmok") stalks of Utirik are much shorter than before, and the people feel that this is a result of the radiation. I had a recent talk with the director of agriculture for the Marshall Islands District (Liki), and although he personally felt there to be no relationship between the damaged arrowroot on Utirik and the radiation, he did relate an interesting conversation he had had with Dr. Conard on Bikini Atoll in 1954 following the incident. Liki tells me that Dr. Conard asked that three things be placed on the "prohibited list" following the incident in 1954: 1) A certain species of reef fish, 2) the coconut crab (considered a delicacy by the Marshallese), and 3) arrowroot. It is interesting that arrowroot—one of the prohibited items according to Dr. Conard—is believed to be presently damaged as a result of the radiation in the minds of the Utirik people.

(b) There are a few mutant strains of breadfruit and coconut trees on Utirik Island, and although these may indeed be random mutation and unrelated to the radiation, the people of Utirik are convinced that these mutations are directly related to the radiation.

(c) The important point here is that the people of Utirik sincerely believe that these effects are a result of the radiation, whether or not these effects are indeed the result of the radiation.

III. Physiological effects of radiation on Utrikese

(a) It is medically accepted that there are serious physiological ill-effects in the Utirik people, however, there is still some question about the character and extent of these effects. E.g., thyroid tumors are continuing to manifest after 23 years. I think it is instructive to look at Dr. Conard's own words in his 20-year medical report where he states on page 75 " * * * That the thyroid effects may not yet be manifest." This should be kept in mind when considering the question of compensation and continued medical treatment for these people. It is rather curious that a cut-off date of 1987 for compensation was included in the Senate bill, and the "full settlement" clause included in the House bill, in light of an indefinite prognosis and increased number of radiation-related diseases.

(b) Two people from Utirik were air-evacuated after the March 1977 medical survey revealed suspected cases of skin cancer. I would like to know if these two people did indeed manifest skin cancer as suspected. My curiosity stems from the mention by Dr. Conard on page seventy-three of his twenty year medical report that there may be incidence of late-occurring skin cancer as a result of the radiation.

(c) Life shortening is a manifestation of a dysfunctioning thyroid gland. There were some cases of stunted growth on Rongelap Atoll following the incident of March 1, 1954, and I am wondering if either of these two problems are continuing today.

(d) [REDACTED], the son of two Utirik exposed persons who was born three years after the incident has recently been operated on for a malignant thyroid tumor. The burden of proof appears to lie with the doctors that [REDACTED] malignancy was unrelated to genetic inheritance.

Senator METZENBAUM. Congressman Balos, I am about to wind up this hearing.

Mr. BALOS. Mr. Chairman, I would like to point out we have a general statement that was submitted earlier, but because of certain developments we would like to revise it for the record at a later date on the bill before us, section 2 under Senate bill 1192, the section be amended to say each person be awarded the maximum of \$750,000. We feel this would be a comparable sum awarded to a citizen within the United States.

Another section be amended to award for radiation—

Senator METZENBAUM. I am sorry, Congressman. I have another commitment in 5 minutes. I must be there.

Mr. BALOS. I would like to submit it for the record.

Senator METZENBAUM. We certainly appreciate your doing so. We appreciate the presence of all who have come long distances to be with us here this morning.

Is the Department committed to full implementation of the CIP program in which the Congress of Micronesia has based its request?

Mrs. VAN CLEVE. It is my understanding it is.

Senator METZENBAUM. Will you provide the committee with a breakdown of the expenditures for the trust territories I previously suggested?

Mrs. VAN CLEVE. We certainly will.

[Subsequent to the hearing, the following was received for the record:]

TRUST TERRITORY OF THE PACIFIC ISLANDS

ESTIMATED OPERATIONS EXPENDITURES

[in thousands of dollars]

Agency	Fiscal year	
	1977	1978
Direct:		
High Commissioner's Office.....	508	506
Judiciary.....	862	826
Federal Comptroller.....	310	446
Grants:		
Health services.....	7,946	7,735
Education.....	12,562	12,130
Public affairs.....	1,717	2,131
Resources and development.....	5,759	5,510
Protection to persons and property.....	2,632	2,600
Administration.....	6,284	5,818
Transportation and communication.....	3,845	4,063
Public works.....	8,084	8,946
Development technical assistance.....	300	500
Total.....	51,889	52,011