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POSSIBLE RETURN OF BIKINI NATIVES

April 7, 1952

Letter to Mr. Dean from James P. Davis, Director Office of Territories, Department of Interior

Enclosed a letter to Davis from McConnell, Deputy High Commissioner, Pacific Trust Territories pointing out the need for something to be done for the Bikini natives now living on Kili. Fishing is poor, poor harbor facilities and general conditions are poor. The enclosure asks:

1. Can natives be returned to Bikini?
2. Would AEC provide some money to buy another island for the natives.

Davis asks if early conference can be set up.

(Mr. Dean asked Mr. Boyer to have Biology & Medicine - Division of Military Application get together a position for him to take during the meeting.)

April 9, 1952

Memorandum to Mr. Dean from Mr. Boyer  
Recommends that no assurance be given that natives can ever return to Bikini because:

1. AEC may need Bikini if Eniwetok goes up with M.
2. Or contamination may be so bad we cannot use Eniwetok for a long time.

Biology & Medicine states no radioactive hazards at Bikini that would harm natives if they were returned, but Mr. Boyer recommends that this information should not be volunteered since there is some doubt on the basis which AEC would want to prevent return of the natives. Mr. Boyer states AEC has no money to buy another island for the natives or to compensate them for Bikini. Last sentence states that AEC would be glad to testify that Bikini is not available to the natives.

April 17, 1952

Memorandum to Mr. Boyer from Mr. Dean  
States that he was visited by Thomas, Davis and Sady to discuss the matter. Mr. Dean told them that we would have to secure additional information on radioactive hazards at Bikini since last survey was made in 1949, also told them that AEC might still have to use Bikini.

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AUTHORITY: DOE/SA-20

BY H. R. SCHMIDT, DATE:

14A del to 6/20/94

MILITARY RESEARCH &amp; APPL.

Davis asked two things:

1. Have a recheck made on radioactivity at Bikini and if safe,
2. Consider another island for test use.

Mr. Dean said that Thomas and Davis would be happy to survey the trust islands to find one meeting on specifications.

(Note on memo to General Fields for Mr. Boyer - Please have a further study made of this problem.)

April 17, 1952

Letter to Mr. Dean from Davis

Confirmed agreements of conference

1. AEC will re-examine health hazards at Bikini.
2. AEC will advise of island characteristics of another test island.
3. Interior will suggest possible islands as test sites.

April 24, 1952

Memo to Colonel Schlatter from Colonel Sturges

Sturges discussed matter with Sady, Department of Interior who stated that Honolulu Office of Interior asked to provide information on suitable islands and atolls as test sites in place of Bikini.

(Colonel Schlatter note: After above information is available, we will ask Santa Fe Operations if one of the uninhabited islands will serve as an alternate rather than Bikini.)

May 2, 1952

Memo to Sturges from Bugher

Confirms their telephone conversation to the effect that a re-survey of Bikini coincides with Biology & Medicine plan to have this done in near future. They have the money to do this. Dr. Donaldson, University of Washington Fish Laboratory, will get a team together. Since it will be some months before they are ready, Bugher asks for specific questions needing an answer right away.

Following actions seem necessary:

1. Get Biology & Medicine to state final position, as soon as possible as to whether Bikini is safe for the natives to return and live there.
2. Assuming Bikini safe, SFO-AEC must determine whether Bikini should be held as test site.
3. Assuming we can get along without Bikini, SFO-AEC must select another island from the list to be submitted by the Department of Interior.
4. Question of money to pay for another island for the natives must be resolved if we decide to keep Bikini.

From  
NMB-N

~~Internal Document~~ SI 102000 7753000

Attachment 8

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