



United States Department of the Interior

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OFFICE OF TERRITORIES  
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20240

Hon. Lloyd Meeds  
House of Representatives  
Washington, D.C. 20515

BIKINI FILE

JUL 22 1969

Dear Mr. Meeds:

Secretary Mickel has asked me to acknowledge and respond to your letter of July 10, 1969, enclosing a copy of a letter which you received from Mr. Bill Williams, Science Editor of the Seattle Times. Mr. Williams reported some concerns of Dr. Edward E. Held about the cleanup of Bikini atoll now being conducted by the Defense Atomic Support Agency.

Dr. Held, of course, has been on Bikini more recently than any of us and we are, therefore, in no position either to confirm or to refute his comments with respect to the operation now underway. DASA is the agency of the United States Government which is charged with the cleanup responsibility. As far as we are aware, no major break-down or delay has occurred and the cleanup process is going according to schedule. We had originally estimated that six months would be required for the clean-up, but, with the fiscal year funding problem that developed, it was decided several months ago that a slight stretch-out is required. We currently expect the cleanup to be completed in late September or early October.

Dr. Held also stated that the operation is being supported from Hickam Field, rather than Kwajalein. It is my understanding that there was never any intent to support the DASA project from Kwajalein although the resources of Kwajalein could be sought in the event of emergencies.

High Commissioner Johnston is planning to visit Bikini in mid-August and I am taking the liberty of sending him a copy of your letter and that of Mr. Williams. I believe he should be aware of the comments made by Dr. Held and Mr. Williams in order that he might personally look into the situation. The High Commissioner has had a representative on the atoll during the cleanup phase and he will probably also wish to have a report from him before he visits Bikini.

Dr. Held also expressed some concern with respect to the support which the Trust Territory might expect from Kwajalein during the resettlement phase of the Bikini project. We had, in fact, not planned on any substantial support from Kwajalein other than the essentially emergency support which that activity normally provides us. A possible exception might be aircraft assistance.

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BOX NO.	<u>1227; "ERDA # 2"</u>
FOLDER	<u>BIKINI SURVEY (BIO-MSD)</u> <u>July, 1969</u>

*[Handwritten signature]*

I appreciate your calling this to my attention. As you know, we are very desirous of seeing the Bikini resettlement program move forward efficiently and well. I am, as I noted, calling this correspondence to High Commissioner Johnston's attention and will be happy to give you a further report based upon his visit to Bikini next month.

Sincerely yours,

(Sgd.) Elizabeth P. Farrington

Elizabeth P. Farrington  
Director

cc: Mr. Johnston, HiCom

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