

February 7, 1972

HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

SPEAKER

Bethwel Henry

VICE-SPEAKER

Henry Samuel

FLOOR LEADER

Ekpap Slik

The Honorable Henry Jackson
Chairman
Committee on Interior & Insular Affairs
Senate, United States Congress
Washington, D. C.

SENATE INTERIOR COMMITTEE
RECEIVED
FEB 23 1972
U.S. SENATE
WASHINGTON, D. C. 20510

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Dear Mr. Chairman:

MARIANAS DISTRICT

Felipe Atalg

Herman Guerrero

Carlos Shoda

MARSHALLS DISTRICT

Ataji Balos

Charles Domnick

Henry Samuel

Ekpap Slik

PALAU DISTRICT

Polycarp Basillus

Timothy Otkerill

Tarkong Pedro

PONAPE DISTRICT

Bethwel Henry

Heinrich Irlarte

Otter Paul

Joab Sigran

TRUK DISTRICT

Endy Dols

Sasauo Haruo

Masao Nakayama

Raymond Setik

Hans Willander

YAP DISTRICT

John Mangofel

John Rugglmar

I wish to bring to your attention and consideration a matter of great concern to me personally and the people on whose behalf I am writing you and the members of the Committee.

I am speaking of the plight of the people of Rongelap and Utirik who were exposed to radioactive fallout from the 1954 hydrogen bomb tests in Bikini. I now believe that the United States Government has, for reasons I can only guess, ignored and neglected the health of these H-bomb victims. Moreover, they have not been adequately compensated for what they have been subjected to. And because of circumstances surrounding the 1954 - tests, I am now compelled to believe that their plight may have not been wholly an accident as the U.S. Government has been claiming.

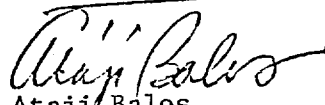
I have enclosed a copy of the Journal of the House of Representatives, Congress of Micronesia, which contains the speech I made concerning these people. The journal also contains a memorandum detailing the deportation from Micronesia last December of a professional Japanese medical team who had come at my invitation to investigate the health of these H-bomb victims. Also in the journal are observations of the Head of the Japanese team contained in a letter to me.

I am writing to you and the members of the Committee because I believe that you share the same concern for the plight of these people. I also believe that you want to clear the air of any question surrounding the 1954 "accident." And I appreciate hearing from you concerning this matter.

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Thank you for your attention and assistance in
this matter.

Respectfully yours,



Ataji Balos
House of Representatives

Enclosure

cc: Hawaii Delegation

Administration always turns against me in which I am trying to do for these
people. They are not interested in Micronesia. Maybe we should deport

replace them. Who do they think they are turning down the wishes of our Micronesian people? I don't think they have the right to do that. These are our islands. They have been here only a short time. Mr. Speaker, I really don't think that this kind of thing should be allowed. Who in the hell do they think they are to turn down the wishes of our people? Now, Mr. Speaker, I am going to deliver my speech.

"Mr. Speaker and honorable colleagues, on behalf of two groups of our constituents, I rise today to express their sincere appreciation and gratitude for the ready understanding and moral support that this Congress has in the past unhesitatingly extended to them. On their behalf I also beseech this Congress to not forget them in the future but to continue such generous understanding and support for them.

"The people I am speaking for are our constituents from the islands of Rongelap and Utirik in the Marshalls. As you know, these Micronesians are the brothers and sisters who were exposed to and have since been suffering the effects of atomic radiation emanating from the 1954 hydrogen bomb test in Bikini by our Administering Authority.

"Mr. Speaker, while I am not in possession of conclusive evidence to prove it to this House, I am now convinced that the United States knowingly and consciously allowed the people of Rongelap and Utirik to be exposed to the 1954 fallout. This was done to the Rongelapese and Utirikese so that the United States could use them as human guinea pigs in the development of its medical capabilities to treat its citizens who might be exposed to radiation in the event of war with an enemy country. This is a crime unmatched in peacetime.

"It is now 18 years since the beastly crime against all humanity and the people of Micronesia was committed but the sinner who professes to be the most decent nation on earth has conveniently and successfully swept it under the rug of deception and secrecy. Simple justice begs for the truth.

"We are told that the radioactive fallout on these people was an accident caused by a shift of winds. Who does the United States intend to fool with this sort of statement? The reason, it is written, why Bikini was chosen as the site of the atomic tests was that few people would be affected. This is an acknowledgment that the United States knew that these people would be exposed to the fallout. Moreover, Rongelap and Utirik are within 300 miles from Bikini and surely the United States knew that these islands were within the range of the fallout. I cannot help but conclude that this was a planned accident. And I also see the whole affair tainted with racism. The United States chose to make guinea pigs out of our people because they are not white but some brown natives in some remote Pacific islands.

"Although these people could never be adequately compensated for their contribution to American medical science, they have been given pitifully small monetary compensation. About 80 Rongelapese have received \$800,000 and all the 159 Utirikese have been promised a meager \$16,000. Twenty-three Japanese fishermen of the 'Lucky Dragon' who were also exposed to the fallout were given two million dollars. I ask--are Micronesian lives worth less than those of other peoples?

"The medical team that the Rongelapese and Utirikese have been receiving is also highly questionable. Since the fallout, doctors with the U. S. Atomic Energy Commission, which is responsible for the development

assist in the restoration of their health and extend an official invitation to the World Health Organization and the Japan Congress Against A-and H-Bombs to come to Micronesia to investigate and examine the health conditions of the people of Rongelap and Utirik.

"If there is no objection from my colleagues, I would like, Mr. Speaker, to insert into the official records of the House certain information pertaining to what I have just been sharing with you for the last several minutes.

"Thank you very much."

The Chair recognized Representative Setik.

Representative Setik: Mr. Speaker, I share the same feeling Congressman Balos mentioned. I would like the information to which the Congressman referred to become a permanent record of the Congress, and I offer it for the record.

"December 16, 1971 Office Memorandum
From: D. F. Olsen

to December 15, 1971

"Prior to the arrival of the team on Majuro on Dec. 7th, Ataji Balos had made repeated request (sic) to the Hicom for permission for the group to be allowed to visit the nuclear bomb victims. The response of the Attorney General was that the applications were under consideration but 'temporarily denied.' No reason for the denial was ever stated by the Attorney General in the dispatches received before the group arrived. Rep. Balos' last cable

...plane as the medical team stated that at least fifty people from
other news sources and live television coverage attended the departure
of the group from the Tokyo airport on Dec. 6th.

"On the morning of Dec. 8, 1971, a meeting was held in the Nitijela
chambers attended by myself, Rep. Balos and the contingent from Japan.
This was my first knowledge of the medical team's (sic) actual presence
in Majuro. They explained that they had entered as tourists and requested
that we take immediate steps to obtain permission (sic) to change
that status so they could begin their work. A hectic examination of

Trust Territory as a tourist could change his status while remaining within the TT. Neither the Immigration Officer nor the District was

your many friendly kindnesses and assistance. I am sincerely
sorry that we could not meet H-bomb sufferers both in Rongelap and
Utilik (sic) under our very nose. Although we could not accomplish
our project sufficiently, it was a great pleasure for us to be able
to meet H-bomb sufferers in Majuro. Through talking with those

for which is not good for their health.

"4) (Female, 57 years old)

I don't understand what is swellings in the abdomen. In the worst case, I dare say, after the operation cancer has transferred (sic) to another part of her body. Hope her to take a close medical examination and must be undergone an operation again if it is necessary.

"5) (Female, 25 years old)

I don't think that she is a case of thyroid, by the AEC data I'd rather (sic) worry about a lot of ⁹⁰Sr and ¹³⁷Cs which are

stored in her body. Comparing with the inhabitants of Kill Island, ⁹⁰Sr is counted 8 times as much high and ¹³⁷Cs is 10 times as much as high in her body. And the quantity of these elements in body had increased from 1967 to 1969, of which I am very worried. As ⁹⁰Sr is stored mostly in bone, it is thinkable that it is some related cause to sterility. ¹³⁷Cs is accumulated in muscle. Anyway both elements contain strong radioactivity, so they can surely effect to human beings. I am afraid if she is discouraged too much when she is told the fact. Dear Mr. Ataji Balos, I hope you encourage her not to be distressed spiritually. I recommend her to live on Majuro but not on Rongelap, because she had better not to eat anymore the food containing radioactivity.

"I hope all of them will recover their fine health as quickly as possible. I am extremely sorry that I could not stay in your place and give them medical treatment."

INTRODUCTION OF RESOLUTIONS

H.J.R. No. 70

Introduced by: Rep. Mangefel

Requesting the Joint Committee on Program and Budget Planning to insure that the dock facilities under the Capital Improvements Program and the Five Year Plan include provision for new docking facilities at Colonia, Yap, and to declare the present port facilities at Colonia, Yap, a "disaster area."

H.J.R. No. 71

Introduced by: Rep. Atalig

Nominating the Honorable John O. Ngiraked, Land Management Officer of the Palau District, for consideration for appointment to the Micronesian Claims Commission.

MISCELLANEOUS BUSINESS

Representative Mangefel: Mr. Speaker, I would like the House to recognize the presence of some distinguished visitors from the Yap District -- Chief Roboman, Chief Kenmed, Chief Lukan, and Secretary to the Council, Mr. Jesus Mangarfir.

Representative Atalig: Mr. Speaker, may I ask the House to recognize the presence of Mr. Dick Goddeon, special representative of EPA from San Francisco.

Representative Guerrero: Mr. Speaker, I would like to take the opportunity to express my sympathy to Congressman Balos and the people of Rongelap and Utirik. I am very much concerned that the Administration would turn down such a request for guarding their health. This action by the High Commissioner and the Administration is no less than dictatorial, communistic, and fascist and I would like personally to offer my pledge to support the people affected and to work toward their cause. Thank you very much, Mr. Speaker.

Chief Clerk: Mr. Speaker, the members and staff of the House of Representatives have an invitation from Phil R. Yates of Air Micronesia which reads as follows: