

10/1/73

Organization

Chairman Ray

THRU: General Manager

ENEWETAK PROGRESS

This is in response to Mr. Gorman Smith's memorandum of September 21, 1973, to Mr. Hollingsworth.

For the past year, the AEC has been involved with the Departments of Defense and Interior in planning for the return of Enewetak Atoll to its original inhabitants. From October 1972 to February 1973, the AEC conducted an extensive radiological survey of the atoll concurrent with a Department of Defense (DOD) engineering study. This study and our survey will provide a basis for planning the cleanup of the atoll. Further, the DOD and the Department of Interior (DOI) are jointly preparing a single Draft Environmental Impact Statement (DEIS) for the cleanup and rehabilitation of Enewetak.

These activities are derived from a mutual agreement reached by representatives of the three agencies on September 7, 1972. It was agreed then that the AEC would fund for and conduct a pre-cleanup radiological survey and provide recommendations for accomplishing cleanup; that the DOD would conduct a pre-cleanup engineering study, fund for and accomplish the cleanup; and that the DOI would fund, plan for, and carry out rehabilitation. It was further agreed that the AEC, on a reimbursable basis, would provide radiological support to the DOD, as requested, during the cleanup operation. When cleanup is complete, the AEC will carry out a radiological and biological verification program to include periodic monitoring for an indefinite period.

Our radiological survey is now the principal AEC activity and will provide the basis for the judgements and recommendations for cleanup and rehabilitation now being prepared for Commission approval. The Manager, Nevada Operations, with LLL's Radiochemistry Division Leader as his technical director, planned, organized, and carried out this survey. The reduction of data from nearly 4,500 samples of soil, water, fish, sea and land plants, air, animals, and birds is now nearly complete with the final report of the survey scheduled to be published November 1, 1973.

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The lifestyle of the Enewetak people will be described in detail in the radiological survey report. Calculations of exposure to post-cleanup residual radioactivity, if any, will be based on this lifestyle. Further, the preparation of the lifestyle description has served to involve the Enewetakese in matters affecting their return to their homeland. They have been most cooperative and eager to assist not only the AEC work but long-range planning by the DOD and DOI.

The Director, Division of Biomedical and Environmental Research, has organized a Radiological Assessment Review Group which is composed of individuals not directly involved in the survey and which will oversee and guide evaluations of the survey. The members of this group are: Dr. N. F. Barr, Division of Biomedical and Environmental Research, Chairman; Mr. T. F. McCraw, Division of Operational Safety; Dr. B. Shielen, Public Health Service; Dr. C. L. Weaver, Environmental Protection Agency; Dr. R. S. Leachman, Department of Defense; Dr. P. F. Gustafson, Argonne National Laboratory; Dr. C. R. Richmond, Los Alamos Scientific Laboratory; and Dr. A. H. Seymour, University of Washington. This group has been reviewing the adequacy and sufficiency of the survey data and their work is now nearly complete. It is expected that recommendations of this group will be generally favorable as to the completeness of the survey report.

The Director, Division of Operational Safety, has formed a Task Group to prepare the recommended judgements and recommendations for Commission approval. This Task Group has been working with the NV and LLL staffs closest to the survey as well as knowledgeable AEC staff (DMA, DBER, DMNT, DRS), Interagency staff (DOD, DOI, EPA), and advisors (TTPI, UNL). These recommendations and judgements, to be forwarded for the Commission's consideration by December 1, 1973, will be limited to radiological considerations and will include:

- a. Recommendations on whether the radiation environment of the atoll is acceptable for permanent habitation;
- b. Actions which provide for radiation dose reductions through alterations of the environment;

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- c. Practical advice and guidance on living habits; and
- d. Follow-up actions to be taken subsequent to cleanup and rehabilitation.

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