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# United States Department of the Interior

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY  
WASHINGTON D.C. 20240

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July 8/75
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AUG 29 1975

**Memorandum**

**To:** Assistant Secretary, Program Development and Budget

**From:** Director of Territorial Affairs (Sgd.) Fred M. Zeder

**Subject:** Radiological Survey of Bikini Island and Eniu Island of Bikini Atoll

We are faced with a critical situation in the Bikini Resettlement Project which requires immediate decision.

Work on the Bikini Resettlement Project had been halted temporarily pending a new radiological survey which was being conducted on Bikini Island. This was necessary since the people wished the last increment of houses to be located in the interior of the island rather than along the lagoon. You will recall that you chaired an Inter-Agency meeting on this aspect on June 25, 1975. The preliminary report on the June radiological survey now has been released and a meeting was held at Livermore Laboratory in Livermore, California, from August 11-13. This was attended by representatives of all agencies concerned to discuss the scientific analyses and recommendations.

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In brief, the June 1975 analysis has shown that parts of the island of Bikini are still contaminated and in certain aspects parallels radiological conditions existing on Engebi Island in the Eniwetok Atoll. For Engebi, the official U.S. decision was that the island was potentially too dangerous to permit residence there. Accordingly, the Eniwetok Resettlement Project excludes Engebi as a habitation place.

A basic question now arises as to what should be done with respect to Bikini Island where some 40 housing units and one community building have been completed for the people of Bikini. Some 150 Bikinians are waiting on Kili planning to move to Bikini Island in September. This would be the first official contingent of the approximately 700 former Bikinians who have indicated they wish to return to Bikini Atoll. Additionally, there are some 70 Bikinians already residing on Bikini Island. These have drifted back on their own during the past two years.

Background

Bikini Atoll was surveyed and analyzed by the Atomic Energy Commission during the 1964-67 period. In 1968, Bikini and Eniu Islands were

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declared "safe" and suitable for resettlement. Since that period, testing and analysis techniques have been vastly improved. The same current techniques used in Knewetak Atoll were applied in the June 1975 survey of Bikini Island and Eniu Island. The analysis reveals that Bikini Island has considerable radiation levels in the interior portion which is above the acceptable safety standards. Final analysis of other factors, particularly lens water, is expected only to underscore the potential dangers of living in certain parts of Bikini Island.

In contrast, the island of Eniu, some four miles to the south of Bikini Island, definitely is "safe" by all the new testing methods and analyses. Bikini Island received heavy fallout from the 1954 "BRAVO" tests whereas Eniu Island being some four miles to the south was outside the fallout corridor.

ERDA, realizing that the TTPI Administration has built 40 housing units and one community building on Bikini Island, included recommendations which would permit the use of housing facilities presently there and yet keep the external and internal dose estimates within safe limits. These recommendations require that certain remedial actions be taken and prohibitions be established:

1. soil removal and placement of clean coral gravel around the housing units;
2. no use of Bikini Island ground or "lens" water for drinking or cooking purposes;
3. no pandanus or breadfruit grown on Bikini Island to be eaten;
4. no more housing units to be built on the island; and
5. all community buildings, particularly the school facilities, to be on Eniu Island.

A decision needs to be taken at once on the options open

1. Should the Department of the Interior accept the ERDA recommendation that present facilities on Bikini Island be used under very specific regulations and prohibitions. This would acknowledge a risk factor.

OR

2. Should a decision be made to concentrate all housing facilities and community facilities on Eniu Island.

If this decision is made, it would entail replacing the 40 housing units and the school building already completed on Bikini Island. The TTPI Administration has roughly \$700,000 on hand from FY 1975 for Bikini construction plus another \$400,000 for additional construction in the FY 1976 Budget. At present costs, this would not be enough for all of the remaining 38 housing units and additional community buildings.

A rough estimate of construction costs for the entire living complex on Eniw Island is about \$3.8 million. This would not include major repair work on the dock there or on the small airfield.

At a minimum, then, constructing a complete village complex on Eniw Island would run to approximately \$4 million. A Special Supplemental of approximately \$3 million would be required to complete the Bikini Resettlement Project.

You may wish to call an immediate meeting of the Washington Inter-Agency group to discuss this problem. OSD concurs that a high-level meeting should be held on this matter in the very near future.

(Sgd.) Fred M. Zeder

cc: Secy file

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CONFIRMED TO BE UNCLASSIFIED  
AUTHORITY DOE/SA-20  
BY D. R. GILSON DATE 6-16-94  
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Memorandum

To : Distad Marshalls  
From : Distad Rep Bikini  
Subject : My comments on the accompanying report on the M-boats  
at Bikini Atoll.

Since I arrived on Bikini over six months are the M-boats have been one of my biggest problems. One of the three has never run in all of this time. The other two have run sporadically. Most of the observations made by Mr. Kirk I can personally verify. Having spent over six months with these M-boats I can relate many instances that back up his conclusions.

There have been times when we have tried to move one of the inoperative M-boats by tying one of the running M-boats to it and using the power from this one to move both of them, and have one or both of the engines on the running boat cut out and fail to restart (the batteries soon go dead upon repeated attempts). In one instance we nearly were blown out to sea before we managed to get one of the other engines running and move back to the dock. -- When the two running boats are docking and the engines are changed from ahead to astern one of the engines frequently fails.

The ramps on the boats frequently do not operate and off-loading of many items especially heavy equipment, is impossible. -- The ramps have been down numerous times and the winches have been unable to lift them, and in two cases the ramps fell into the water and could not be raised without special assistance.

The latest instance of repeated malfunctioning of these M-boats occurred during the past three weeks. The Atomic Energy Commission chartered one of the boats for their use in conducting their work on various islands on the atoll. In three weeks the M-boat was used only five hours due to sundry mechanical problems. They used our Boston Whaler instead of the M-boat.

All of these defects and problems require at least the services of one full time marine engineer. We have not had a qualified marine engineer on Bikini for over four months and the man we had originally was overworked to the point of not being able to even keep up with the problems as they occurred, let alone get ahead of them. Needless to say, the problems we have had with the M-boats have slowed the rehabilitation program down. And now that we are starting to work on the island of Bikini we need a M-boat operating every work day. And the safety factor, which is foremost, has not even been mentioned.

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This project requires one well equipped M-boat in good running condition all of the time and one full time, qualified marine engineer to maintain and operate the boat. We have neither. I will not be responsible for accidents resulting in damage to or loss of equipment and/or injury to or loss of life, that result from the malfunction or improper operation of the M-boats.

I request that you initiate action in all possible haste to obtain for us a safely running M-boat and a qualified marine engineer. Please advise me of your action as soon as possible.

/s/ Lewis Glenn

Lewis Glenn  
Distad Rep Bikini

cc Deputy Hicom, Coleman  
Chief Com Dev, Saipan  
CDA, Marshalls  
Distad, Marshalls  
Dr. E. E. Held, AEC Party

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