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James L. Liverman, Director
Division of Biomedical and
Environmental Research

NEGOTIATIONS WITH DEPARTMENT OF INTERIOR REGARDING AEC PARTICIPATION
IN FUNDING OF MICRONESIAN PUBLIC LAW NO. 5-52

On December 12, 1973, negotiations were conducted between AEC representatives, Drs. Burr, Edington, and Marks, and Mr. Whitnah, and Messrs. Peter T. Coleman, Deputy High Commissioner, Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands, John E. DeYoung, Territorial Officer, Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands, Harry U. Brown, Territorial Officer, Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands, and Dr. Masao Kumangi, Director of Health Services, Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands. The meeting was held at 1:00 pm at 1717 H Street.

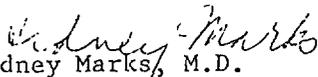
The negotiations were held to establish the manner and degree of participation of AEC in funding of medical services for inhabitants of Rongelap and Utirik as provided in Micronesian Public Law No. 5-52. The AEC position was declared to be that expressed in a letter from Commissioner Larson to Mr. Carpenter, Assistant Secretary of the Interior, on August 6, 1973, namely, that AEC funding be confined to research-related services. The meeting was concerned with defining the services that are to be considered research-related, the cost categories that should be reimbursed and the cost of certain items in the program as well as the total annual cost. We restricted the population to be covered to persons included in Dr. Conard's roster for his medical surveys. These would be exposed persons from Rongelap and Utirik and persons that Dr. Conard has designated as controls for inclusion in his study. Offspring are to be excluded since they are not a duly recorded and identified study group. Furthermore, identification of parentage is sometimes difficult. The offspring have not participated as subjects in the surveys and have received only incidental medical care for their personal benefit from members of the survey teams.

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The nature of the expenses that AEC would wish to assume was clarified during the discussion. Funding would be (1) for transportation of patients and accompanying persons from the outer islands of Rongelap and Utirik to the hospitals at Majuro or Ebeye by field ships during the course of their regular runs and (2) for per diem for the patients and accompanying persons while on Majuro or Ebeye. Transportation costs would include the fare, which is about \$20 for a round trip, and meals. The principal expense is the per diem cost since it will be necessary to keep the patient and accompanying traveler on an island for a period of 30 or 60 days while waiting for the field ship to make its next run.

There was considerable discussion about the per diem. Dr. Kumangi originally proposed a figure of about \$20 which he stated to be standard in the Pacific Islands. However, that could be reduced to the neighborhood of \$10 by having the Trust Territory provide housing in facilities that they can construct at each island at relatively modest cost (about \$15,000 per facility). P.L. No. 5-52 provided that housing that would be furnished by the Marshall Islands district government so that the reduction of per diem based on availability of such housing would be in accordance with the provisions of the law. The number of visits from the outer islands to the hospitals was estimated by Dr. Kumangi to be 2-3 monthly for the population covered by AEC reimbursement. During the meeting an absolute maximum of \$30,000 for the annual cost of the program was projected with final per diem and total cost figures to be discussed later. In subsequent discussions with John DeYoung we have reached agreement on a per diem of \$9 and an annual maximum of \$20,000.

It was agreed that annual surveillance of the utilization of services afforded under the law would be desirable and that the AEC renewal of the agreement would be contingent on the findings of such surveillance. AEC is to receive an accounting of expenditures prior to annual renewal. It was finally agreed that Mr. Coleman may communicate the AEC intent to participate to the Micronesian Congress, which reconvenes for its annual session in January 1974. AEC representatives stated that they would draft an agreement based upon the negotiations and report back to the Department of the Interior. The meeting was adjourned at 2:30 pm.


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