

BROOKHAVEN NATIONAL LABORATORY
ASSOCIATED UNIVERSITIES, INC.

Upton, New York 11973

(516) 345-3577

Medical Department

January 4, 1978

The Honorable Adrian P. Winkel
High Commissioner
Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands
Saipan, Mariana Islands 96950

Dear Mr. Winkel,

There are several subjects I would like to bring up:

1) We have been puzzled by the occurrence of three cases of cancer of the thyroid in the exposed Utirik people which is a greater incidence than expected based on dose, particularly since the non-malignant tumors were not increased in that population as they were, along with thyroid cancer, in the exposed Rongelap people. We need to know more about the general incidence of cancer of the thyroid in the unexposed Marshallese people in order to be able to assess the Utirik finding. We have therefore, in addition to examination of the thyroids in the exposed people, carried out thyroid examinations in nearly all unexposed Rongelap and Utirik people. We have picked up about 8-10 tumors of the thyroid in this group. We would like to have thyroid surgery done on some of this group that meet the same criteria we have used in the exposed people. We may have as many as 4-6 of these unexposed people at this time on whom thyroid surgery is indicated. We would like to get this done at Tripler Hospital in Honolulu and have our surgeon, Dr. Dobyms, perform the surgery. (Tripler has agreed to this.) In order to avoid any association of their tumors with radiation exposure in this group, we wonder if the Trust Territory would be willing to refer these patients to Tripler (usual procedure) and handle travel and other logistics arrangements. DOE has agreed to reimburse or pay the Trust Territory directly for the expenses involved. I would appreciate your consideration of this matter (and also Masao Kumangai and Ezra Riklon who will receive copies of this letter).

2) As you know, we have had some problems in the past related primarily to misunderstandings due to poor communications with people. We feel that it is very important that we try and correct this, not only by having our Resident Physician learn to speak Marshallese, but by hiring a Marshallese assistant to help explain to the people the objectives and results of our examinations. Such an individual would preferably be from your medical group in the Marshalles and he would work closely with our Resident Physician at Ebeye and accompany him on quarterly trips to Rongelap and Utirik as well as

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participate in the annual surveys. Their services would be paid for by BNL. One man that comes to mind is John Iaman, who has participated in many of our surveys. (I have not spoken to John about this). Also, Mrs. Kabua, Public Health Nurse at Ebeye, might be a good choice. We feel that such a person could be helpful to both of our programs. We would appreciate your opinions.

3) Dr. Hugh Pratt, who has just joined our program, will be going to Kwajalein in advance of our survey about the middle of February. In order that he can assist Dr. Masao Korean at Ebeye until the latter part of March, it is requested that he be granted a temporary license to cover that period. I will mail a copy of his license to Dr. Kumangai soon.

4) We are planning our annual medical survey for about March 23 - April 26. We will have a fairly large group and plan to carryout rather extensive examinations. I am sure that Drs. Riklon and Korean will welcome consultation with some of the specialists I will have with me (internist, thyroid specialist, gynocologist, tropical medicine specialist, ophthalmologist). We would appreciate your permitting the following Trust Territory medical personnel at Majuro to participate: Dr. John Iaman or another practitioner, Sebio Shoniber, Nelson Zetkeia, Laijo Elanjo, and a nurse (female, preferably, perhaps Mrs. Kabua). DOE will of course reimburse Trust Territory for their expenses as previously agreed upon. In view of the incapacitation of our LCU, DOE at Honolulu will probably be in touch with you about your help in chartering one of your vessels. Since we have several trailers to take, if possible, it would be nice if we could use the "Caroline Islander", which I understand has a fairly large well deck.

5) I am enclosing a copy of our dietician's analysis of the Bikini meal plan you sent. Except for calcium in the adult diet, it appeared to be nutritionally adequate. We feel that it is important that calcium be furnished in excess of daily needs in order to inhibit the absorption of radioactive strontium. We would appreciate it is this can be done.

Best wishes for the New Year.

Sincerely,

Robert A. Conard, M.D.

RAC:gc

Enc.

CC: Mrs. R. Van Cleve, DOI
Dr. Walter Weyzen, DOE
Dr. Masao Kumangai
Dr. Ezra Riklon

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