

UNITED STATES
ATOMIC ENERGY COMMISSION

WASHINGTON 25, D. C.

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IN REPLY TO: ~~SECRET~~

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Admiral Arleigh A. Burke, CDR
Chief of Naval Operations
Department of the Navy
Washington 25, D. C.

SAN BRUNO FRC

CONFIRMED TO BE UNCLASSIFIED &
BY AUTHORITY OF DOE/OIG

Tahm 2/27/91
DATE
ALTR DNA SWISHER TO
DOE MA-225, 1-31-90

CLASSIFICATION CANCELLED

BY AUTHORITY OF ~~SECRET~~

You will recall that as a result of the March 1 detonation of the CASTLE test series, conducted by JTF-7 in the Pacific in 1954, the inhabitants of Rongelap and Utrik in the Marshall Islands were exposed to radioactive fallout. The Atomic Energy Commission, on behalf of the United States Government, accepted responsibility for periodic medical examinations of these Marshallese following this incident. Since that time the AEC, in collaboration with the Naval Medical Research Directorate and the Naval Radiological Defense Laboratory, has conducted three follow-up medical examinations. These examinations were greatly facilitated by the assistance afforded to the medical teams by CIRCRAFT and the Commanding Officer, 'KAVET/RYAL'.

The purpose of this letter is to solicit your assistance in the conduct of a fourth follow-up medical examination to commence on or about March 1, 1957. In addition to satisfying the Government's responsibility for the health of the Marshallese, these studies are of value to the Department of Navy and to the AEC in advancing our understanding of the nature of radiation injury and the delayed effects of radiation.

The natives of Rongelap are still living on Rjet Island awaiting the completion of plans for their return to their native atoll. Inasmuch as Rjet is adjacent to Makjuro, their medical examinations and those of the control group living on Makjuro will be conducted on Makjuro at the hospital operated by the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands. The natives of Utrik who were exposed during the test series have since been returned

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to their home island and it will be necessary to conduct their medical examinations at Utirik. It is proposed to send a medical team of fourteen (Schedule A, attached) to the islands of Majuro and Utirik. Two Marshallese interpreters and one Marshallese nurse will join the team at Majuro.

A large quantity of laboratory equipment and supplies, approximately three tons, must be moved from Majuro to Utirik to accomplish the 157 examinations required at that island. A power supply is essential to operation of the laboratory equipment. A reliable source of water must be available. Messing and berthing the medical team afloat would greatly simplify the operation.

In addition to the medical examinations, it is deemed scientifically desirable to bring four Rongalape and one Majuro resident to Chicago at the completion of the medical examinations to test them for low level internal radioactive deposits by means of a total body radiation counter located at the AEC's Argonne National Laboratory. Mr. Jack Tobin, an employee of the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands, Department of the Interior, has agreed to accompany the Marshallese selected and informal approval has been given by the District Administrator of the Marshall Islands.

SAN BRINO ERC

Assistance from the U. S. Navy in the accomplishment of the above objectives would be of immeasurable value to the medical team. Accordingly, your approval of the following is respectfully requested:

- 1. Participation in the operation by all naval personnel, both service and civilian, included in Schedule A. Informal discussions have indicated that the Commanding Officers of USS and USS are willing to make the personnel so named available for the mission.
- 2. Transportation via USS of all personnel named in Schedule A.
- 3. Transportation via USS of all laboratory equipment and supplies from the Department of California to the Marshall Islands for use in the Marshallese islands.

4. Transportation via MATS for Mr. Tobin and the five Marshallese from the Marshall Islands to Honolulu and return.
5. Assignment of class 2 priority for all MATS transportation required.
6. Assignment by CINCPACFLT to the medical team, for a period of approximately fourteen days to commence on or about March 20, 1957, of a vessel or vessels capable of meeting the requirements listed in Schedule B.
7. Air transportation for the Marshallese nurse from Majuro to Utirik and return.
8. Provision by COMNAVSTAKWAJ, on a loan basis, of the items listed in Schedule C.
9. Authorization to all naval commands en route to provide assistance to the medical team as required.

Your cooperation in effecting accomplishment of this medical mission will be deeply appreciated.

Sincerely yours,

SAN DRAGO FRC

R. J. Cook
Surgeon General Manager

cc: CINCPACFLT
Commander, JT-7
Chief, Bureau of Medicine and Surgery
Chief, Bureau of Ships
Surgeon General of the Navy
CO, IMAE
CO, IMAE ✓
Department of Interior

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SCHEDULE "B"

Criteria For Selection of Sea Transportation

1. Accomodate medical team of sixteen men and approximately 3 tons of equipment. The additional items to be obtained on loan from COMNAVSTAKWAJ and from the Trust Territory hospital at Majuro will make up the additional weight.
2. Facilities to provide messing and berthing during Utirik Examinations.
3. Shallow draft. It is understood that Utirik passage has a depth of 3' fathoms and a maximum clearance of 140 yards.
4. If it is determined that more than one vessel will be used, the vessel which carries the equipment must be capable of beaching. That vessel will be used to establish a hematological laboratory and will require a minimum power source of 5 KW.

SAN PEDRO EPC

It is requested that the vessel or vessels assigned to this mission load loan items listed in Schedule C at Kwajalein; pick up the medical team and equipment at Majuro on or about March 20, 1957; proceed to Utirik for the medical examinations, remaining there approximately eight to ten days; return the medical team and equipment to Kwajalein.

SCHEDULE "C"

Items Required on a Loan Basis

3	Large wall tents (16'x16') with flooring
10	Tables, folding leg, laboratory, approximately 72"x27"x30"
10	Chairs
20	Field cots
20	Mattresses
20	Pillows
	Necessary linen for 20 cots
2	Lister bags

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