

REPOSITORY LOS ALAMOS NAT LAB  
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April 13, 1954

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Dr. Alvin C. Graves  
CTG 7.1  
Eniwetok, M. I.

Per \_\_\_\_\_  
(Person administering this collection)

By Elizabeth Daly 7/12/77  
Mary Joe Tregler

Dear Al:

In accordance with your request I am sending an outline for a proposed study which should form a basis for determining a date at which the Rongalaap natives might return to their home islands. To assist you in evaluating it I believe that some additional explanation is called for. I am supplying this additional information only to you but you should feel perfectly free to make whatever use of it you see fit.

In the first place, the proposed project is the way we would like to see the work done if we were doing it ourselves. We started out with certain main assumptions which are about as follows:

1. From information which we have so far it seems impossible that the natives can be returned to Rongalaap before September or October at the very earliest.
2. It should be possible by that time to acquire sufficient data and information on which to base an intelligent decision as to the actual date of return.
3. No intelligent decision can be made except on the basis of a series of observations; we can extrapolate from a curve but not from a single point.
4. We feel it essential to get the first observations in the very near future before the start of the rainy season in June or July. Other observations must be made later to determine the effect of heavy rains.
5. It is our feeling that the collection of specimens and their analyses should be done by a single organization. We would strongly oppose having one group collect specimens and ask someone else to carry out the assay.
6. We feel that this project should confine itself exclusively to obtaining an answer for this one question. We feel that this is necessary for the avoidance of delay and confusion. The project should not, for example, be concerned with the present physical condition of the natives other than to give proper consideration to the doses which they have already received.

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7. The project as outlined is based on utilizing in so far as possible Holmes and Kerner facilities, plus personnel who are already in the Forward Area; the number of people who would have to be transported would be quite small.

8. We feel that we in B-Division have got adequate personnel, facilities, and equipment to do a considerable amount of the work. We would require logistic support from H&M, the assistance of Lauren Donaldson's University of Washington group, and the advice and assistance of Trust Territory officials in providing assurance that we are not overlooking any significant articles of diet or living customs which might be of significance.

9. It is my assumption that the Task Force would like, in so far as possible, to be relieved of this problem. I feel that to a considerable extent this is a responsibility of SFCO and HFO. I also realize, however, that the general problem is one of interest at all levels up to and including the United Nations. For this reason, the Division of Biology and Medicine will in all probability, and quite properly, feel that they should make the decision as to what should be done and by whom. For this reason, this proposal is addressed only to you for whatever purpose you may wish.

10. We would like to do the job. We don't flatter ourselves to think that ours is the only outfit that can do it, but we do think that we have adequate experienced personnel and facilities to provide you and the Trust Territory officials with the answer you want in the shortest possible time with a minimum of logistic effort. Other groups which might be interested in taking this on are NEDL, HCO, UGIA (Staff Warren), and probably others. All are probably well qualified but all have their own idiosyncrasies. They make uneasy bedfellows and any of the groups named would undoubtedly prefer to carry out the project single-handed according to their own ideas. I am sure that is the case with us. We probably have one advantage in that we know fairly definitely what we would like to do and are prepared to start immediately. We would certainly wish to take advantage of all of the information which has already been collected, but we feel that this information is of little or no value until it is put together with data acquired in the future.

You may wish to let Tom White consider this material and there is no question in my mind but that he will have suggestions of value and he has the advantage of being on the spot at the moment. You might even wish us to go ahead with this quite independent of any other investigations. We will, however, be reluctant to become a part of an unsoldy organization in which we might be thrown a lot of curve balls. If we are to do anything, however, we would like to get started at the earliest possible opportunity.

Very sincerely yours,  
THOMAS L. SHIPMAN, M.D.

THOMAS L. SHIPMAN, M. D.,  
Health Division Leader

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