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The Hon. Ruth G. Van Cleve
Director
Office of Territorial Affairs
U.S. Department of the Interior
Washington, D.C. 20240

Dear Mrs. Van Cleve:

Following our meeting with you and Department of Energy officials after the April 2 testimony before the House Appropriations Subcommittee on the Interior, I have worked with the Bikini/Kili Council to prepare a proposed Bikini resettlement program, a copy of which is enclosed.

You indicated at our April 4 meeting that you would try to expedite the interagency review process of the proposed resettlement program, and you were hopeful that the administration would be able to go back to the Appropriation Subcommittee shortly with specific funding proposals. If I can be of any assistance in this process, please do not hesitate to contact me.

I look forward to hearing from you soon.

Sincerely,

Jonathan M. Weisgall
Jonathan M. Weisgall

cc: Bikini/Kili Council
Hon. Philip Burton
Hon. Robert C. Byrd
Hon. Ruth C. Clusen
Hon. Henry M. Jackson
Hon. Adrian P. Winkel
Hon. Sidney R. Yates

Enclosures

...containing first presence in the region, so they immediately
seized on it as a possible resettlement site. The Pentagon,
however, has been adamant in its refusal to permit Wake to
be used for resettlement. In sum, the Bikinians would be

interested in resettlement on Wake, but the Pentagon has declared that any such resettlement is out of the question.

Palmyra, a privately-owned atoll consisting of 39 islands, poses two major disadvantages for the Bikinians. First, and most important, it is more than 2,000 miles from the Marshall Islands; a move to Palmyra would thus isolate the Bikinians from their traditional environment. Second, although the total land area of all 39 islands in the atoll is over two square miles, none of the islands has as much living area as Kili, where most of the Bikinians now live. Given Palmyra's distance from the Marshalls, the people would want to live together in one central area, but a move to Palmyra would not permit this.

Moreover, most of the Bikinians have rejected the possibility of moving to Hawaii, 2,400 miles northeast of the Marshalls, because they fear they would lose their Marshallese identity and cultural heritage.

With respect to the Marshallese atolls the Bikinians visited, resettlement possibilities are virtually nonexistent. First, there is already some social friction between the Bikinians and other Marshallese peoples, and the continued special treatment the Bikinians will require in the post-Trusteeship period (e.g., food programs and medical care) may well contribute to greater strains. Moreover, resettlement on part of an atoll might create a ghetto environment, with the Bikinians being regarded as intruders and

"squatters," even if the land and lagoon rights were leased or bought, This would further contribute to the Bikinians' concern about freedom of movement and loss of collective identity. For example, the few Bikinians now living on a small part of Jaluit Atoll do not feel they are free to travel to other parts of the atoll. Since these sometimes subtle -- and potentially serious -- social problems are not susceptible to resolution, resettlement on another inhabited atoll in the Marshall Islands is not acceptable. As to uninhabited atolls, such as Erikub, it appears that they are uninhabited simply because they are uninhabitable. Even those which could sustain some human life could not possibly support a significant part of the entire Bikinian population, which now numbers approximately 925 people.

Having discussed and reviewed all possible resettlement options, the people of Bikini have concluded that their first choice is Bikini Island in Bikini Atoll; their second choice is Eneu Island in Bikini Atoll; and their third choice is Wake. Given the problems of resettlement on Bikini Island and Wake, this realistically leaves only one option open -- Eneu Island in Bikini Atoll.

II. ENEU ROTATION PROGRAM

The Bikinians' preference would be to move the entire Bikinian population to Eneu and perhaps some of the islands west of the Eneu channel, such as Airukij, Airukol, Bikiren, Lele and Eneman.

It is possible, however, that these islands could not handle such a large number of people. If this is the case, the Bikinians propose to utilize a system devised by the people of Enewetak several years ago when they were living on Ujelang Atoll. When the Enewetak cleanup began and the southern islands began to be rehabilitated, the people wished to establish an advance community at the atoll. Since the whole population could not move at once, the people decided to set up a rotation system, pursuant to which a certain percentage of the population moved from Ujelang to Enewetak for six months. After six months, these people left, and they were replaced by another group. This rotation system

has continued through today and has worked successfully.

The Bikinians propose to apply this system to Eneu Island. Under this system, the population desiring to resettle on Eneu would be divided into two or three groups. Once housing and support facilities are ready at Eneu, those people in the first group who wished to move to Eneu could do so. After a set period of time -- for example, one year -- they would leave, and the second group would move to Eneu. Under this system, every Bikinian would have an opportunity to live on Eneu, but no one would live there for more than one year in every two or three.

Two numbers must be clarified before a specific program can be established. The first is the number of groups. The Bikinian leaders have indicated that approximately 700 of the 925 Bikinians would probably want to resettle on Eneu. Using this number as an estimate, the 700 people could be divided into two groups of 350 each or three groups of approximately 235 each. The size of the groups (and hence the number of groups) should depend on the support facilities which can be constructed on Eneu and the other islands west of the Eneu Channel.

The second number which must be clarified is the length of stay at Bikini Atoll. One year seems to be a reasonable period for rotation, but there must be further discussion with the people of Bikini, as well as Department of Interior officials, before any final decisions are made with respect to either number.

In the meantime, DOE should prepare annual and 30-year whole body and bone marrow calculated doses and risk assessments (based on population figures shown below, not a population of 10,000) assuming the following living patterns:

1. 350 people live 100% of the time on Eneu Island for one of two years (other year spent elsewhere in Marshalls).
2. 350 people live 100% of the time on Eneu for one of three years.

3. 235 people live 100% of the time on Eneu for one of two years.
4. 235 people live 100% of the time on Eneu for one of three years.

The same calculations should be made on the assumption that people live 90% of the time on Eneu and visit Bikini Island 10% of the time, assuming further that no food from Bikini Island is eaten. In addition, each calculation and/or assessment should be made on two different dietary assumptions, one assuming no food imports and the other assuming 50% food imports and 50% local food from Eneu.

Lastly, DOE should prepare an evaluation of five of the islands located west of the Eneu Channel (see page 3 above) based on two living patterns. One pattern should assume that the islands are used for agricultural purposes, and the second should assume that the islands are used for both residential and agricultural purposes by a population of approximately 100 people.

It is clear that an Eneu rotation system must be carefully monitored and enforced in order to work successfully. Representatives of the major holders of land rights on Eneu have stated that these landholders would permit other Bikinians to live on Eneu. The Bikinians have also indicated that they are prepared to comply with DOE restrictions regarding a return to Eneu. In order to be in compliance with federal radiation protection guidelines, it would be necessary for the people

~~to observe whether DOE restrictions are being followed.~~

An essential element of an Eneu resettlement program will be the establishment of a regular shipping schedule to bring imported food to Eneu. At a Congressional hearing in June, 1978, when people were still living on Bikini Island, witnesses testified that although monthly trips were scheduled to take food to Bikini, ships called on Bikini sporadically because the Trust Territory Government did not have enough ships available to service Bikini on a monthly basis. Jendrik Leviticus, who attended the hearing representing the people then living on Bikini, stated that

- "ships...apparently did not arrive on anything approaching a monthly basis, and that
- caused the Bikinians to go into the interior
- parts of the island and eat the breadfruit,

the coconuts, the pandanus growing
-- These excursions to the interior of the
-- island would occur in the time period well
after the arrival of a ship, when no new
ship was in sight. That accounts for the
Bikinians more or less disobeying what they
had been told by DOE officials, but it was
simply the function of not having enough food....
[S]ometimes as much as 3 months would go by
without the arrival of the field trip ship."

The infrequency of ship service caused the people to
eat food grown on Bikini. This, in turn, caused their body
burdens to exceed acceptable federal standards, resulting in
their removal from Bikini.

The mistakes of the Bikini Island resettlement must
not recur. If ships do not arrive at Eneu regularly, it is
probable that the people will go right to Bikini Island and
eat whatever food is available there. This program cannot
be implemented halfway. If the Eneu rotation system is
accepted, there must be a special ship purchased and earmarked
for supplying the food program on Eneu.

III. OTHER COMPONENTS OF A RESETTLEMENT PROGRAM FOR THE PEOPLE OF BIKINI

The proposed Eneu rotation program constitutes
only one part of the Bikinians' proposed resettlement program.
If the rotation system is implemented, presumably only part of
the Bikinian population could be accommodated on Eneu at any
given time; the remainder would live where they are now. Most
of the Bikinians -- 550, or about 60% -- now live on Kili. An

and Bant. However, some of them
wish to live permanently on Kili or Ejit and not participate
in a rotation program to live on Eneu.

The United States has always assumed that the
Bikinians would live "temporarily" on Kili until they could
return to Bikini. If DOE projections are correct, that re-
turn to Bikini is at least several generations away. Since
there will probably be a permanent Bikini population remaining
on Kili and Ejit, there should be a program of permanent
rehabilitation of these islands. For example, the temporary
wooden housing that was built on Ejit and Kili during the past
two years will last for perhaps five or ten more years, assuming
there is no typhoon. The Bikini resettlement program should
provide permanent housing for the people, similar to the sprayed
concrete houses which were recently built on Enewetak. These
were the only buildings that survived the 1978 typhoon there.

Other steps should be taken to make living conditions
on Kili more tolerable. For example, an STOL (short-take-off
and landing) strip should be built on the island to accommodate
small aircraft, such as the airplanes recently purchased by
the Marshall Islands Government.

As for ocean access to Kili, three options or combinations of options should be considered. First is the question of a dock. The Trust Territory Government has begun to examine this possibility, but no feasibility study has been completed. If construction of a dock capable of withstanding the surf conditions on Kili proves to be impractical or too costly, the second option should be to dredge a deeper channel at Kili, thus permitting field trip ships to anchor closer to the island in calm weather. The third option would be to employ the methods used when the area was controlled by the Japanese. Field trip ships should off-load supplies at Jaluit Atoll during the winter months if surf conditions at Kili make access impossible. In addition, a smaller boat should be based year-round at Jaluit. On those few winter days when the surf conditions at Kili are tolerable, the people on Kili can call Jaluit by radio and the small boat can make the 40 mile trip in a few hours to off-load supplies at Kili. Between an airstrip and improved ocean access to the island, living conditions on Kili could be significantly improved.

Other aspects of a resettlement program include the following: First, there must be a comprehensive health care program for all the Bikini people. The 139 people removed

from Bikini in August of 1978 are currently being monitored by scientists from Brookhaven Laboratories, but many more people were on Bikini between 1970 and 1978 who left before August of 1978; these people also require medical monitoring.

Second, there must be periodic comprehensive radiological surveys of Bikini Atoll and updated ration dose assessments.

These two actions will be implemented pursuant to Public Law No. 96-205.

Third, there must be a continuing food support program for the people living on Kili. Fourth, there must be an improved education program on Kili. Very few Bikini children have learned English and the other skills necessary to attend public high school in the Marshalls. The assignment of two American elementary school teachers to Kili would greatly help the Bikini children to overcome these educational deficiencies.

Fifth, all use rights in the land and lagoon of Bikini Atoll should be conveyed to the people of Bikini.

Sixth, the people of Bikini must receive compensation from the United States for (a) the complete destruction and disappearance of islands as a result of the 1954 "Bravo" test, (b) the loss of the use of Eneu Island between 1946 and

the commencement of the proposed resettlement program, (c) the indefinite loss of the use of Bikini and other islands in the atoll since 1946, (d) the loss of revenue from the copra crop on Bikini Atoll, (e) injuries suffered by people who lived

on Bikini Island from 1970 to 1978 resulting from the United States nuclear testing program, and (f) hardships suffered by the Bikinians as a result of being displaced in 1946 and again in 1978, as well as their continued displacement in the foreseeable future.

Lastly, the United States government should pledge to return the people to Bikini Island if and when the island is safe for resettlement.

IV. INVOLVEMENT OF THE PEOPLE OF BIKINI
IN THE RESETTLEMENT PROGRAM

Maximum practicable participation by the Bikinians in the resettlement program, both in its planning and execution, is necessary and desirable. The people of Bikini, through the Bikini/Kili Council or other representative group selected by the Council, should be regularly consulted and informed with respect to the resettlement project.

REPOSITORY PNNL
COLLECTION Marshall Islands
BOX No. 5682
FOLDER Education Program

DOCUMENT DOES NOT CONTAIN ECI

Reviewed by D. J. Kusan Date 5/1/97