



United States Department of the Interior

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20240

Marsh

JUN 29 1979

Mr. Bryant S. Zebedy
Clerk of the Marshall Islands Nitijela
Post Office Box 24
Majuro, Marshall Islands 96960

Dear Mr. Zebedy:

I wish to acknowledge on behalf of Secretary Andrus, the receipt of the certified copy of Resolution No. 15 N.D.-1 of the Nitijela, "A Resolution requesting the Government of the United States of America to immediately conduct a radiological survey in the Marshall Islands."

I feel constrained to point out that paragraph 4 of this resolution makes a very broad and sweeping statement, that as far as I am aware of, is not borne out by recent radiological data. This is the statement, "Whereas, recent radiological data, accumulated by the United States Government indicates an extraordinarily high incidence of apparently radiological induced physical disorders among Marshallese residents, outside what was originally thought to be the range of contamination caused by the nuclear explosions at Bikini and Enewetak; particularly, on Likiep Atoll and Wotje Atoll".

Recently, when the Marshall Islands Political Status Delegation was here in Washington, it raised this question with respect to Likiep Atoll but the question rested not on "recent radiological data accumulated by the United States", but rather on data collected by a Marshall Islands Likiep survey team and presented to the Department of Energy and to our Department by the Secretary of Foreign Affairs for the Marshall Islands Government, Mr. Anton DeBrum, at a meeting here on May 16, 1979.

This Department and the Department of Energy assured Mr. DeBrum that priority attention would be given to the request that a medical survey be conducted of the people of Likiep Atoll.

We will discuss the other aspects of the resolution, i.e., the portions requesting a radiological survey of the Northern Marshalls, with the Department of Energy. It appears to me that most, if not all, of this request may have been met by the recent radiological survey conducted on

cc: [redacted] Dr. Walter Weyzen, DOE, with copy of enclosure.

13 atolls in the Northern Marshalls. The preliminary results of the Northern Marshalls Radiological Survey will be available by Mid-July. You may be assured that the Nitijela will receive copies of any report issued by the Department of Energy.

In any event, both this Department and the Department of Energy, have pledged to work closely with the new government of the Marshalls on the question of radiological matters and we will be in constant touch with local government officials.

Sincerely yours,

RUTH G. VAN CLEVE

Mrs. Ruth G. Van Cleve
Director
Office of Territorial Affairs