

September 8, 1977
San Francisco

Dr. Konrad Kotrady
University of Utah Medical Center
Dept. of Family and Community Medicine
50 North Medical Drive
Salt Lake City, Utah 84132

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

Dear Konrad:

I have just received a copy of your October 31 letter to Ron Bakal, the Utirik attorney. I must say at the outset that I appreciate your continuing concern for the people of Utirik in relation to the ERDA/Brookhaven Medical Program, and again am delighted with your outspokenness in reference to the glaring deficiencies that continue to hamper the Program.

Especially of concern to me in your letter was the fact that four new nodules had been diagnosed in the March '77 survey. It is interesting to note that despite this high rate of new suspected thyroid cases, it was decided that the June and September surveys were canceled--a most dangerous and negligent act committed on the part of Dr. Robert Conard and the other people in charge of the Utirik Medical Program. I have long suspected that the health of the Marshallese has been a less significant priority to the ERDA/Brookhaven doctors than the scientific findings, and this suspicion continues to be substantiated by the actions of these doctors. It is incredible to me how these doctors, all of whom have taken the Hippocratic Oath, continue to conduct their surveys in a punitive and un-humanitarian way with people who have been victimized by United States negligence.

I find it difficult to understand the reasoning behind Dr. Conard's claim that "it would be difficult to replace Dr. Knudsen in the Marshalls." You yourself told me that when you applied for the position a few years back, yours was one of sixty applications, meaning there are fifty-nine other physicians who are interested in the position. I think in essence what Dr. Conard is really saying is that he is having a difficult time finding someone to go out there who won't make trouble and/or publicity, i.e. someone like yourself who tried to make improvements on a substantial level. It is clear that Dr. Conard's personal interest in maintaining a "tight ship" (after all, he was an admiral) has taken precedence over the general health of the Marshallese, and as Dr. Conard nears his retirement with the Medical Program he is doubly concerned that blatant inadequacies should remain concealed and covered up. And

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FOLDER 14 SEPTEMBER - MAY 1979

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to this mentality I say, "Throw the man overboard!!!" We are talking about the health and welfare of hundreds of human beings as contrasted to the reputation of a single individual--an individual who I suspect is having many second thoughts about his twenty-five year involvement with the Marshallese Medical Program.

Konrad, I am in full sympathy with your suggestion that we pursue this matter at the highest level possible. I think it is high time that the various governmental agencies--including the President as per your suggestion--learned about the abuses being perpetrated in the name of the United States Government on innocent peoples. It is instructive to re-read the United Nations Trust Agreement regarding the U.S.' responsibility to the people of these islands, and compare that with their treatment by the ERDA/Brookhaven doctors.

Another significant thing to look at is your repeated offer to assist with the Marshallese Medical Program, and Dr. Conard's continued refusal to have you connected with the Program. After all, we must see Dr. Conard's continued silence about your offer as a refusal. If Dr. Conard was sincerely concerned with the Marshallese Medical Program--as he will have some people believe--how is it that he has not consulted you about making necessary changes in the faulty Program?? With your year-long experience as part of the Marshallese Medical Program, you would most certainly contribute in a beneficial way if your advice on the matter was sought.

I can only hope that our efforts will result in an improved Medical Program for the Marshallese, and that humanism will prevail over scientific findings and personal ambitions as regards the health and welfare of the Marshallese.

Please let me hear from you soon.

Sincerely,

Glenn H. Alcalay
Glenn H. Alcalay
Former Peace Corps
Volunteer
333 - 4th Avenue
San Francisco, CA 94118

cc: Ron Bakal, Esq. Utirik attorney
Dr. Robert A. Conard. Brookhaven Nat'l. Laboratory

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