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Dr. Robert Conard, M.D.
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Dec, 28, 1972

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Dear Bob,

Thanks for your letters. I am licking my wounds and counting my blessings after the shipwreck. Actually, I am missing only minor things, and if TT does not reimburse it, I think I can write it off and not lose any sleep over it. Of course, when they finally offloaded the ship, they took all the cargo to Majuro and dumped it there, in spite of the fact that all the passengers were from Ebeye, and the ship carrying the goods was docked here for a few minutes. I am glad I went out there and picked up my things before they started moving it. Now the Ebeye people have to travel to Majuro and see if they can recover their things and bring them back here. I have stopped marvelling about the wisdom of all things, but I can't help recording the wonders.

I am writing Honolulu asking for an OK to charter a small boat for the trip to Utirik. If I don't I will never get there. Palau Islander is out of commission, Ralik Ratak, Militobi and the white LCU have been milling around here all December, helping in the (vain) effort to get Palau Islander off. The whole field trip schedule is in shambles again and with all the goodwill in the world I can't count on them.

I am waiting for the I¹²⁹. , and have the stuff, the bottles, and what else they need to repeat the study. But they were rather upset about the failure of the first one. When they hand me back the urines, can I give them some money to show that we appreciate the cooperation? I have promised them nothing. I tried to do the study on Rongelap,

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the only one who volunteered was wife, but then she had some domestic trouble and did not follow up. I want to try again the next time. This visit was too dramatic, what with three funerals and two one-year birthdays. The whole village is involved in all that goes on, and the preparation takes days.

I have been thinking about the job I am doing and what it takes to do it right. I read your letter in the Micronitor, and want to thank you for it. He had translated it into Marshallese as well. If the political situation stays calm, we shall ^{have no/} ~~fear~~ of lack of cooperation from the people. The problem is to get there. The field trips are no good. You cannot rely on them for any regular cooperation, and in the end you will have invested in me, my salary and the support for me, with only half the job done; that which I can do here and on Majuro. Chartering a small boat is all right, but there is never any around. I ~~hear~~ ^{hear} by the grapevine that DeBrum's boat "Louise" is out of dry-dock and available. If true, I shall rent her. But again, you cannot build a program on that kind of support.

I see three ways of resolving the issue. The best, but presumably way too expensive, is to put an amphibious plane at the disposal of your man here.

Bill Streenan suggested another one, which I assume involves too much red tape: To have the air rescue units log some of their traing hours by moving me around. But there are none here on Kwaj. They are moved in from Honolulu or Wake each time they have a job here.

The third possibility was suggested by Sid Loeb, KMR's marine expert. He said the Army is long in supply of "Boat, passenger and cargo, design 2001". They are brand new, you can get one for the asking. But I guess it would cost you \$100.000 to take her out of the mothballs,

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equip her to our specifications, and ship her out here. By commercial vessels the shipping alone would be \$40,000. Presumably we could get a free lift on some navy vessel and save that last item. To hire a Marshallese crew and pay KMR for fuel and maintenance would cost you \$50,000 a year. But then you would have a boat, both for your two yearly field trips, for your man here, and to do some services for other AEC activities here, both on Eniwetok and Bikini. She seems ideal in all respects but one; if she could do 15 - 20 knots instead of 7 - 10 we could get from one atoll to the next in daytime. After sitting on that rock, I shall never really enjoy night navigation again. But you can't win them all.

If you want more information on this boat, write or call
Mr. Nick MIKUS - Special Items Manager, Watercraft
US Army Mobility Equipment Command
4300 Goodfellow Blvd
St. Louis, Mo. 63120
Telephone 314 - AM3 - 2361

It won't hurt you to inquire.

I shall write you again about the equipment checkout. In the meantime I wish you, your crew, and your family a Happy New Year!

yours

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Nick Mikus".

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