

Companion

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Subject: Purpose, Policy, and Background of Experimental Plantings on Enjebi and Their Relationship with Bikini Cleanup

The segment of the Enewetak people who owned property and traditionally lived on the island of Enjebi have always expressed a deep desire to return to their home island -- Enjebi. In fact the first master plan envisioned development of that island as a residential island. The Report by the AEC Task Group on Recommendations for Cleanup and Rehabilitation of Enewetak Atoll, 19 June 1974,^{1/} as approved by the Commissioners 19 August 1974 offered little hope of reestablishing a community on Enjebi in the near term. Recommendation No. 3 of the above report^{1/} discusses the problem of radiation exposures on Enjebi and provides that studies be conducted using test plantings to determine when exposures would be within acceptable criteria but no soil removed (emphasis added). This approach was recommended as the one which would have minimal adverse impact on the island environment. Further recommendations included the extension of the study to Lujor, Kirunu, Bokoluo and Bokombako. At the September 1974 presentation of the DEIS and the AEC Task Group Report to the people of Enewetak, the AEC representative, Dr. Martin Biles, made the commitment to support those activities planned and initiated by the AEC which is contained also in the AEC letter of 6 February 1975.^{2/} He further indicated that a conscientious effort would be made to predict when the island of Enjebi could be used. The rationale for the sampling program is quoted from the AEC Task Group Report.

TAB B
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" * Several important components of the Enewetakese diet are either not now available on the Atoll, or are available in quantities which are small compared to the needs of the people. Pigs and chickens are not available at all, but will be reintroduced. No breadfruit is growing now; pandanus and tacca are growing only in scattered locations; and coconut is growing in quantity only on the southern islands. Breadfruit, pandanus, tacca, and coconut must be planted and will begin to produce crops after about 8 years. Radiation dose estimates for these foods have had to be based on correlations with plants and animals now present on the Atoll and on inferences drawn from earlier surveys on Bikini and Rongelap. There are many data points, and these correlations provide the best method currently available for estimating internal exposures. Nevertheless, the method is not as reliable as direct measurement of the foods produced in the areas of concern."

The relationship of the experimental planting program with the Bikini Cleanup can only be stated in terms of the experience in the Bikini Resettlement. Experience in the Bikini Resettlement, possibly indicated a lack of specific data to correlate dose to people from contamination in the soil based on the transfer of radioactivity through specific elements of the diet. Whatever data collected on Enjebi may be useful in deriving general uptake factors of various plants in contaminated soil and may be

useful in estimating dose. However, the application of those factors by inference to specific problems could be questionable. See quotation from the Task Group Report above. For a specific answer to this latter part of the area of concern, specific questions must be addressed to the DoE program manager.

References:

1. Tab B. Volume II, Enewetak EIS, April 1975.
2. Tab K. Volume IIA, Enewetak EIS, April 1975.