



UNITED STATES
DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
OFFICE OF TERRITORIES

the Secretary

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Mr. Harry McKittrick
Assistant Director
Natural Resources Programs Division
Bureau of the Budget
Washington, D. C. 20503

Dear Mr. McKittrick:

This will confirm Mr. Milner's telephone conversation on December 27 with Mr. Darrah concerning our proposed distribution of \$1,700,000 for Bikini if the Atomic Energy Commission and the Department of Defense are able to make available \$600,000 to begin the cleanup work in this fiscal year. It is our understanding that an affirmative decision by Defense is likely within the next few days.

To recapitulate, in the passback for the 1970 fiscal year, the Bureau allowed \$1,700,000 for Bikini. This included \$1,200,000 for cleanup; \$133,000 for replanting (our estimate); \$300,000 for construction (our estimate was \$625,000); \$67,000 for administration and resettlement (our estimate totalled \$71,200); and nothing for improvements to the island of Kili (we had estimated a total of \$100,000 for 1970 and 1971) or to Ujalang atoll (we had estimated a total of \$80,000 for 1970 and 1971).

If cleanup were not to begin until July 1, at the earliest, it would be appropriate to defer part of the proposed Bikini atoll construction. However, if \$600,000 is made available by Defense and the AEC in 1969, thus giving us an early start, we would restore the original construction estimate, provide for needed improvements to the Ujalang and Kili communities and provide for cleanup-related transportation requirements which were not included in our original estimates.

The fiscal year 1969 start on cleanup, which is estimated to require six months, will permit an earlier start on the construction of housing, village facilities, and transportation and related facilities. Therefore, we would devote the \$625,000 originally requested to this purpose. This construction will provide 30 housing units (house plus essential outbuildings and water catchment) for about one-half the current Kili population, village facilities, warehousing, and road, dock and airport work.

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We would leave unchanged the Bureau's allowance for administration and resettlement. However, we have added an item of \$100,000 which is the estimate for cleanup-related air and sea transportation. In discussing this matter with Mr. Darrah, Mr. Milner reported our tentative allocation of that amount to the administration and resettlement item; it could as well go into the cleanup item, because it is directly associated with the cleanup activities.

We would restore funds for Ujelang and Kili, requesting \$80,000 for Ujelang and \$95,000 for Kili. Kili is the present "home" of the Bikini people and will remain so for many of them over the six years required for the redevelopment of Bikini. We expect some to elect to remain there permanently. Improvements to the school, dispensary and watercatchment are essential. Because of the impossibility of landing at the island for many months of the year, warehousing for copra and for imported trade goods is also required to an extent not found in many other islands of the Marshalla District.

Similar improvements are required for the Ujelang people who, like the Bikinians, have been moved to a much smaller living area than their former home atoll of Eniwetok which had much greater resources. Ujelang is a very dry atoll, isolated from the rest of the Marshalls, and the islanders living there have reached desperate straits. The Defense Department has advised us that the return of these people to Eniwetok is not to be expected in the foreseeable future. There is no alternative open to us but to attempt to provide on Ujelang the basic facilities of housing, water catchment, dispensary, school, and warehousing that will permit the people to earn a living and to proceed with an agricultural program of coconut grove replanting that was begun last year. These people simply do not have the resources on the Ujelang atoll to rebuild a viable life without such outside assistance.

Whatever the record might show with respect to the "negotiations" surrounding the original moves of the Bikini and Eniwetok people from their home atolls and their subsequent "payment" of \$350,000 and \$150,000, respectively, the fact remains that these people had no real alternative to "settling" with the United States and accepting whatever was then proffered. I do not mean to imply that anyone at the time attempted to take undue advantage of these people, but it is indisputable that they were left in a disadvantaged situation with very limited resources. Corrective measures are urgently needed; they should not be deferred. It is for these reasons that we include funds for Ujelang and Kili in the 1970 Bikini program.

Sincerely yours,

(Sgd.) Harry R. Anderson

cc: Secretary's File Copy, Secretary's Reading
File, LM
Mr. Norwood

Assistant Secretary of the Interior