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BROOKHAVEN NATIONAL LABORATORY
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Medical Department

July 12, 1978

Mr. Roger Ray
Assistant Manager for Environment and Safety
Nevada Operations Office
Department of Energy
Las Vegas, Nevada 89114

REPOSITORY DOE/PASO
COLLECTION DOE/NV
BOX No. 1228 "ERDA # 3"
Bio-MED, Dr Conrad
FOLDER 10/1977 Thru 9/1978
FY 1978

Dear Roger:

Dr. Pratt and I have discussed the necessity of acquiring a DOE vessel in order to successfully carry out our medical program in the Marshall Islands. In the past, utilization of Trust Territory vessels has been totally unsatisfactory in carrying out our medical mission and, moreover, has jeopardized the safety of the medical teams. The recent acquisition of the LCU greatly improved the logistic support of the program, but proved too small, too slow, and unsanitary.

Based on my 24 years with this program, the following reasons are presented urging acquisition by DOE of the YFU under consideration or another suitable vessel:

1. Operational Capability

The unique nature of our medical examinations with expanded health care program in recent years makes it necessary that we have medical facilities established aboard the ship. Though some examinations can be done ashore, it is preferable and even necessary in some cases to do them aboard ship. The medical and radiological programs require that several large, specialized trailers be installed aboard and there is ample space on the YFU for this. A future consideration is the capability of utilizing the well deck space of such a vessel to construct more flexible and efficient medical and living spaces.

The beaching capability of the YFU is an advantage in getting the patients on and off the ship for examinations.

Recruitment of medical specialists (who voluntarily contribute their time to participate in our surveys) is greatly enhanced by having reasonably comfortable conditions on the ship for the extended periods of time involved. This can be accomplished on the vessel under discussion.

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2. Reliability

The examinations are carried out on a number of widely-separated atolls including Rongelap, Utirik and, in the future, Kili, which is far to the south. We need a reliable ship that can maintain a reasonable speed in order to formulate definite survey schedules. Medical specialists participating must be assured that a reasonably definite schedule can be maintained since time away from their work is at a premium.

We feel that the YFU under consideration - or another suitable vessel - should be obtained, if at all possible, to carry out our program. In the meantime, without a support vessel, it is impossible to carry out the necessary logistic support of our surveys. Therefore, it is imperative that such a vessel be obtained as soon as possible if we are to continue our program.

Sincerely yours,

Robert A. Conard, M.D.

bwa

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