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Speech & Environmental Protection Division

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US DOE ARCHIVES	
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Dear Tom:

The prospects for a "timely" second round of whole body counts on the Bikinians will require immediate and coordinated efforts between DOE, DOI and the Trust Territory. Background information follows:

On our return leg from the Northern Marshall's Radiological Survey, Evie Craighead and I visited Majuro to meet with various T.T. officials. During our visit, we had the good fortune to speak with Carleton Hawpe and his assistant, Taro Lokobel, who works with Carleton as liaison with the Kili people. Mr. Hawpe informed us that 45 Bikini people are now living on Ejit Island, Majuro; and that an additional 50 Bikinians expect to live there after temporary housing is completed early next year. The remaining 40 or so Bikinians have elected to remain on Kili. Also, the T.T. vessel, Caroline Islands will be making four round trips between Majuro and Kili between early November and early December to transport construction materials for new housing on Kili. This will probably be the last scheduled transportation to Kili until the winter seas subside in April 1979.

We also met with Nepa and Jendrik, two Bikinians who were in Majuro at the time. They indicated to us that a great deal of apprehension exists among the Bikini people over possible health effects from their stay on Bikini, and that most of the people wish to have whole body counts and medical exams to allay their fears. The greatest impediment is in the logistics problems of getting the people on Kili who wish to be seen to some place like Majuro or Kwajalein where the facilities can be set up. The following is a list of options as I foresee them for obtaining a second round of whole body counts before the Spring, 1979.

(1) WBC at Majuro in February 1979

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This appears to be the path of least resistance at present. We are tentatively planning to dovetail a WBC trip to Majuro with the BNL Medical Survey planned for mid-January with the new DOE vessel. This vessel is presently scheduled to return to Kwajalein from Honolulap and Utrik on February 9, 1979. At that point, arrangements could be made to transport the WBC trailer and personnel, and medical staff members to Majuro where the Bikinians living on Ejit (and any others who can get to Majuro) may be seen. The problem is that unless special arrangements are made, about two-thirds of the Bikinians will still be on Kili, and will be inaccessible due to the winter sea conditions. Persons at Kili who wish to be seen (and this includes most of the highest body burden group) would have to get to Majuro by early December and remain away from Kili until the winter seas subside in April. Therefore, timely arrangements will

have to be made to get them to Majuro; and their lodging and subsistence needs would have to be provided for until Spring, 1979. New housing on Ejit Island could alleviate part of the lodging problem by February.

(2) WBC at Majuro in December 1978

This option is possible only with immediate and heroic efforts on our part to transport personnel and equipment into the field. It shares the logistics problems detailed in option 1. In addition, some means will be required to transport the WBC trailer from Majuro to Kwajalein. There is no real scientific advantage in making these measurements in December; but we recognize that the "politics" of the situation could demand new body burden information before February 1979.

(3) WBC at Kwajalein in December 1978

Counting at Kwajalein exchanges one problem for another. We eliminate the need to transport the WBC trailer to Majuro, but we now have to transport and lodge the counting subjects at Kwajalein. Ted Kurawski indicated when we discussed this option last month that lodging at Kwajalein for more than a small group of Bikinians (perhaps 10 to 12 at a time) would be nearly impossible. Also, this option restricts us to Bikinians already at Majuro Atoll, or it shares the problem with the Kili residents as discussed in option 1.

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(4) WBC at Kili (Jaluit) in Spring, 1979 or Later

Theoretically, the problems of ship transportation and winter seas will no longer exist, thereby allowing relatively easy access to Bikini residents on Majuro Atoll or Kili. Counting of the Kili residents would best be done in a sheltered anchorage such as the lagoons at Jaluit or Majuro Atolls. In either case, the lodging and subsistence needs of the Kili people will have to be addressed while they are away from home. This option incurs several additional months of delay in obtaining a second round of body burden information.

(5) Urine Bioassay at Majuro

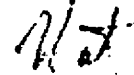
The collection of 24 hour (or longer) urine samples will be coupled with any whole body counting efforts as standard practice, since the determination of dose commitments requires the knowledge of body burdens and loss (excretion) rates. However, inferences can be made as to body burdens from excretion rate data, particularly now that the population no longer has a significant radionuclide intake, and the approximate time of removal from "risk" is known. The option of obtaining 24 hour urine samples from Ejit Island residents for body burden estimates is open to us at any time. Urine collections from Kili residents appear to be possible only between the third and fourth voyages of the Caroline Islands to Kili. If this option is desired, immediate arrangements will have to be made to get sample containers and personnel to Majuro while ship transport to Kili is still available.

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The key issue in these considerations is the desirability of counting Bikinians other than those presently residing on Ejit Island, Majuro. David DeBrue could provide DOE with the names of the Ejit residents so that we can make an evaluation as to how "representative" a sampling they are of the former Bikini population. If DOE commitments require counting of essentially all of the Bikinians, immediate action must be taken to transport those residing at Kili to an accessible place (eg. Majuro); and their lodging and subsistence needs must be attended to until next spring.

Please call me (ITS 666-4250 or -4267) or Bob Mittenberg / Florence Cua (ITS 666-2503) if you have any questions. Should you desire to reach me over the Thanksgiving weekend, call (202) 998-3173.

With best regards,



N. A. Greenhouse,
Project Director
BNL Marshall Islands Radiological
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NAS/blg

cc: K. A. Conard
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