

BROOKHAVEN NATIONAL LABORATORY
ASSOCIATED UNIVERSITIES, INC.

UPTON, L. I., N. Y. 11973

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REFER:

MEDICAL DEPARTMENT

November 4, 1970

Dr. John R. Totter
Director, Division of Biology and Medicine
United States Atomic Energy Commission
Washington, D. C. 20545

Dear John:

I have just returned from a two-week visit to the Islands. Mr. William Streenan, AEC Las Vegas Office, accompanied me in order to arrange certain fiscal matters. I should like to bring the following results of this visit to your attention.

1. The matter of "inconvenience" payment of the Utirik people was discussed at Majuro with the District Administrator, Mr. Oscar DeBrum. Unfortunately, my appointment at Majuro with Mr. Charles Dominik, the Marshallese Congressman who had been asked by the Utirik people to represent them in this matter, did not materialize. He was away in the northern Marshalls campaigning since his Congressional seat was contested by another. I heard that he was making promises to the Utirik people about payment and might be considering employing an attorney. I sincerely hope this matter does not get tossed around like a political football.

A second Utirik case of thyroid nodularity in a young girl was operated upon recently at Majuro. We had recommended surgery in this case from our examinations last March. (The tumor proved to be benign.) Though this case was not in a person exposed to fallout, apparently the people are confused and now think they have two thyroid cases resulting from fallout. At Saipan, the High Commissioner was away in Washington, but I met with his assistant, Mr. Peter Coleman and he called a meeting of several of his department heads including their attorney. I had received your dispatch by then with the okay by Mrs. Farrington for direct discussions at Saipan. I explained the objectives of the Utirik payment and that tentative approval had been obtained from the AEC for payment of \$100 for each exposed Utirik person or their next of kin. It was agreed that the Trust Territory should handle the payment of this money to the people. The method of payment

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Dr. John R. Totter

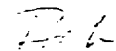
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was discussed and my impression was that the Trust Territory leaned toward payment of a lump sum of \$16,000 to the Utirik people. They would give them the list of people involved and let them handle the distribution. I am not sure if this is a final decision on their part.

2. After interviewing several senior health aides at Majuro, one was chosen to be hired by us to assist us in our program. This health aide will be directly responsible to us and will spend most of his time at Rongelap helping with the general medical care of the people and the thyroid treatment program. He will travel to Ebeye and Majuro where other exposed Rongelap people live to check on their general health status and treatment program in these islands. He will send me monthly reports and participate in the annual medical survey. Mr. Streenan arranged the payment schedule for the health aide at Saipan.
3. The thyroid nodule in the Rongelap girl at Majuro about whom we were worried was found to have reduced in size on treatment and appeared less serious. I, therefore, decided to defer decision for surgery in her case until the March examinations.
4. Transportation arrangements for our survey proved to be less difficult this year in view of a greater number of ships being available and also the presence of several amphibious planes at Majuro. Arrangements were made with the Trust Territory to move some heavy equipment to Rongelap for our survey. Mr. Streenan will arrange to move a surplus trailer now at Honolulu to Ebeye Island to be set up for our examinations.
5. While at Honolulu, we found that there were five Rongelap children who had had thyroidectomies and are now going to school on Hawaii. They were checked on and will be examined there in February.

Sincerely,



Robert A. Conard, M. D.

RAC:ls

CC: Mrs. Farrington
Mr. Ed. Johnston
Dr. E. P. Cronkite
Dr. V. P. Bond
Mr. William Smith, Jr.

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