



UNITED STATES DEPARTMENT OF INTERIOR
 TRUST TERRITORY OF THE PACIFIC ISLANDS
 OFFICE OF THE HIGH COMMISSIONER
 SAIPAN, MARIANA ISLANDS

COMMERCIAL
 CABLE ADDRESS
 HICOTT SAIPAN

405552

August 27, 1969

Mr. William A. Bonnet
 Manager, Atomic Energy Commission
 Honolulu Area Office
 P. O. Box 580
 Honolulu, Hawaii 96809

Dear Mr. Bonnet:

Please excuse the delay in responding to your letter of August 1, 1969, but a couple of matters have come up which necessitated the delay.

It appears that the Department of Defense still has legal possession and control of Bikini Island and until the island is returned to the Trust Territory, we would not have the legal right to lease it to the Atomic Energy Commission. We understand that the matter of the return of Bikini is under serious discussion at the present time. Perhaps you are more familiar with this aspect than we are.

A short time ago, the High Commissioner and others met with some of the leaders of the people on Bikini and the lease to the Atomic Energy Commission was brought up. The request by the leaders was for \$100 per month rent and Mr. Law, District Administrator of the Marshall Islands District, is now working on this aspect of the lease with the people to attempt to have it consistent with the other Atomic Energy Commission leases.

Incidentally, during a recent trip to the Marshalls, I made another inquiry as to the progress on the Utirik lease and I still cannot determine if the lease as prepared is acceptable or not. Mr. Law indicated he would follow up on this for us.

As soon as we hear further on these matters, we will let you know.

Sincerely yours,

Robert A. Hefner
 Assistant Attorney General

REPOSITORY DOE/PASO
 COLLECTION DOE/INV
 BOX No. 1227 "ERDA #2"
BIKINI SURVEY (716-NEA)
 FOLDER AUGUST - 1969