

CERTAIN ISSUES INVOLVING MR. ROGER RAY

NOV 72

Quarantine of Runit

In mid-May 1972, as our preliminary radiological survey of Eniwetok was being completed (and concurrent with the visit of the Marshallese traditional leaders), Roger Ray learned that the radiological survey party had retrieved on Runit Island three pieces of debris which it was then believed might contain metallic plutonium. These fragments were returned by special courier to the University of Washington for priority analysis. Upon completion of the Marshallese visit to Eniwetok, the party returned to Kwajalein and, while there, Mr. Ray received the results of the analysis and it confirmed that the particles were almost certainly metallic plutonium. Knowing the probable source of this material and, therefore, that a large quantity of plutonium probably remained on Runit, he became deeply concerned that no measures were being taken or were available to prevent serious contamination of people, equipment, vehicles, and marine craft. Lacking such measures, plutonium contamination of Eniwetok Island and even aircraft departing therefrom might occur. He immediately consulted with the DNA PACE Project Officer and with the SAMTEC Liaison Officer on Kwajalein and informed them that he felt it his responsibility to cause preventive actions to be taken. To that end he prepared and coordinated with the aforementioned individuals a teletype to the Commanding General, SAMTEC, at Vandenburg AFB, recommending that the CG, SAMTEC, Major General Low, invoke a quarantine until appropriate controls could be established. As soon as he reached Honolulu and was able to discuss this matter by telephone, he telephoned the Acting Manager, NV, to initiate the necessary follow-on actions.

Meeting Between Mr. Ray and Brigadier General Brickel

Sometime before the September 7 interagency meeting, Mr. Ray and Dr. Walt Nervik of Livermore discussed the matter of laboratory analytical workload

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supporting the Eniwetok program. Recognizing that most of the available laboratory capacity which was then available to us was already heavily committed, Dr. Nervik suggested that McClellan had the technical capability and he understood, informally, would welcome the opportunity to participate. Recognizing that such participation would probably require a directive or mission assignment from Washington, Mr. Ray decided that it might be useful to discuss the feasibility of such an assignment with someone from Dr. Carl Walske's office before formally requesting that the Department of Defense provide such support. Since he knew General Brickel and knew also that General Brickel would be at the interagency meeting, he called General Brickel and asked if they might have a brief conversation subsequent to the September 7 meeting on a subject which he felt would not be appropriate to discuss on the telephone. As it turned out, General Brickel had a commitment back at the Pentagon immediately after the interagency meeting and invited Mr. Ray and Dr. Nervik to drop by his office for coffee and conversation. The substance of the conversation was to ask General Brickel if he felt that Dr. Walske would support a request for McClellan laboratory assistance, if and when such a request were made. Subsequently, a formal request originated by Manager, NV, was passed through DMA to DNA, with the hoped-for result.

Pullout of Eniwetok at Time of Typhoon Olga

The total evacuation of Eniwetok on October 23 was directed by CG, SAMTEC, in light of a prediction that the typhoon would do severe damage to the Atoll. The return to Eniwetok 36 hours later was intended as a reconnaissance in force to determine whether the survey program could be resumed. The departure of all AEC and DNA personnel from Eniwetok at about 1300 local on October 25 was dictated by a statement from the Site Manager that he could not support any project personnel at that time. The time of departure from Eniwetok for Kwajalein was dictated by operational requirements at Kwajalein for the evacuation aircraft. Having consulted

with the Site Manager immediately before departure, Mr. Ray was convinced that there was essentially no likelihood that the AEC survey could be resumed for at least two weeks. He had at that time approximately 20 survey personnel on Kwajalein who could do nothing productive at that location. He was aware of severe competition for space on MAC flights from Kwajalein to Honolulu and was aware also of the fact that a MAC passenger flight was then at Kwajalein destined for Honolulu with seats probably available. With ten minutes available before takeoff of the evacuation aircraft for its return flight to Kwajalein, Mr. Ray's only means of communication with Kwajalein was by telephone to the Coast Guard LORAN Station at Eniwetok, thence by Coast Guard radio relay to the Coast Guard Station at Ebeye, thence to the Air Operations Office at Kwajalein. Over this circuitous route, he passed instructions to have all members of his survey team who could be accommodated manifested on the MAC flight for Honolulu--there to await further instructions. In some way this instruction was interpreted to apply also to the Holmes and Narver people who had been participating in the DNA engineering survey and, as a consequence, they too were aboard the MAC flight to Honolulu.

Liaison with Helicopter Pilots

Upon return to Kwajalein on October 25, Mr. Ray received a telephone call from Lt. Colonel Joe Robinson of Marine Air Group 36 on Okinawa advising that MAG 36 was committed to provide helicopter support at Eniwetok commencing about November 1. Colonel Robinson had heard that the survey was in some difficulty due to Typhoon Olga and asked whether MAG 36 should continue with its deployment plans. Mr. Ray advised that, in his judgment it was doubtful that the mission could be accommodated at Eniwetok as early as November 1. Lt. Colonel Robinson informed Mr. Ray that it was feasible for the CH-53 helicopters to stage from Kwajalein

and asked whether it would be reasonable for them to come ahead on approximately November 1 and remain at Kwajalein until Eniwetok could receive them. Lt. Colonel Robinson indicated that he had already asked Kwajalein whether the necessary support could be made available and asked Mr. Ray to follow up on that question. Mr. Ray advised Colonel Robinson that he could not and would not modify the existing deployment and support request but that he would see to it that an appropriate modification to the request was sent to CINCPAC. Late that same evening, CAPT McDyer of the First Marine Air Wing in Japan telephoned Mr. Ray at Kwajalein to confirm the understanding with MAG 36. These two telephone calls, neither of which was originated by Mr. Ray, were his only direct communications with military organizations other than DNA concerning the helicopter resources. The following day, however, Mr. Ray received an information copy of a First Marine Air Wing message to COM, Seventh Fleet, wherein he was badly misquoted as to the extent of storm damage at Eniwetok. Mr. Ray, therefore, originated a message correcting that information. By this time, the Manager, NV, had asked Mr. Ray to come to Honolulu to meet with him, and so, in the message correcting the storm damage information, Mr. Ray requested a coordinating meeting with appropriate CINCPAC representatives in Honolulu. Director, DNA, was made an info addressee on that message. On the same morning, Mr. Ray met with LCDR Brown and Mr. Earl Gilmore. They discussed with representatives of KMR the proposed revised helicopter program and related KMR support requirements. During this period on Kwajalein, there were frequent discussions of alternatives with LCDR Brown and Mr. Gilmore and H&N; however, each group had its own detailed problems to deal with, thus the message from "Ray to CINCPAC" was not coordinated in advance with the DNA representative but was shown to him soon after it was dispatched.

Reschedule of Survey Program (Stretch-out)

The initial survey schedule was developed by NV to optimize the use of the resources which had been furnished during a time window which was

constrained by several external influences. Its revision was dictated by the impact on the typhoon-related delay and of certain logistics factors of which all concerned are now aware. It must be understood that even in the original schedule for the field survey, it was not anticipated that the soil survey results could have any timely and meaningful impact upon cost estimating by DNA in the February 1973 time-frame. There were, numerous discussions on Kwajalein with the DNA engineering survey personnel. DNA was assured at that time that NV would continue to support the engineering survey on whatever schedule DNA might adopt. The revision of the schedule for the radiological survey was an attempt to maintain momentum and assure utilization of the committed helicopter support. The program as outlined recognizes that the survey is now decoupled from Palumbo and, to all intents and purposes, from PACE. Thus the window for field operations is less constrained and more optimum scheduling now is possible considering impact upon base support. The program also puts the hazardous and most physically demanding soil and biota program at a time when improving rather than deteriorating weather may be expected.

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