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Division of Biology and Medicine

FUTURE MEDICAL CARE OF NATIVES OF RONGELAP AND UTERIK

SYMBOL: HSE:HCB

Biology and Medicine has concurred in the proposed letter to Admiral Carney in which the AEC accepts joint responsibility with DON for rehabilitation of the natives. We note, however, that the letter does not, and apparently was not intended to deal with the question of future medical care after rehabilitation. GINOPAC in his 160501Z to CMO makes clear that he does not assume responsibility for future medical care.

In his 210405Z message to me, Dr. Bugher indicates that future medical care after rehabilitation should be the responsibility of AEC, recognizing administrative responsibility of the High Commissioner of the Territories of the Pacific. Apparently this was the understanding informally reached with High Commissioner Midkiff when he visited Dr. Bugher in Washington last week.

While we may not wish to commit the AEC to a long-range program at this time, at least until there has been an opportunity carefully to explore the various ramifications, I think it would be helpful if we could indicate to Dr. Bugher that this division of administrative and medical responsibilities between the High Commissioner and the AEC generally is recognized here as an appropriate and logical future course of action.

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