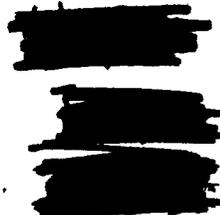




H65 #25



REPUBLIC OF THE MARSHALL ISLANDS

MAJURO, MARSHALL ISLANDS 96960 • CABLE: REPMAR

March 22, 1990

Senator Atlan Anien  
Senator Ataji Balos  
Senator Alden Bejang  
Senator Ring Eliu  
Senator Report Emmius  
Senator Carl Heine  
Senator Hemos A. Jack  
Senator Imata Kabua  
Senator Michael Kabua  
Senator Hermios Kibin  
Senator Evelyn Konou  
Senator Lomes McKay  
Senator Leikman Robert  
Senator Litokwa Tomeing  
Nitijela of the Marshall Islands  
Majuro, Republic of the Marshall Islands

Dear Members of the Nitijela:

Thank you for providing me with a copy of your January 23, 1990, letter to Dr. Steven L. Simon, the resident scientist who is directing the nationwide radiological study pursuant to Article II, Section 1(e) of the Section 177 Agreement. In that letter you expressed concern that the study might be underfunded and recommended that Dr. Simon and the members of the Scientific Advisory Panel, as they develop their work plan, take into consideration prior studies of radiological conditions.

I know that Dr. Simon has taken action on your recommendation--and, indeed, he had anticipated the need you identified for evaluating earlier data. He will be preparing a comprehensive response to your letter.

I would like to comment on two aspects of your letter that relate to activities of the the Office of the Chief Secretary: (1)my testimony of November 16, 1989, before a subcommittee of the United States House of Representatives regarding the need for further scientific work at Rongelap Atoll, and (2)the conclusions of Dr. Henry I. Kohn, director of the Rongelap Reassessment Project, the contract for which was administered by the Office of the Chief Secretary.

Harry Brown NV

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In your letter you expressed concern that the amount of \$2.2 million that has been dedicated to the nationwide study might not be sufficient to complete the job satisfactorily. As justification for this view, your letter cited a portion of my response to a question from the Congressional subcommittee about the planned use of the \$3.0 million that is made available under the Section 177 Agreement for medical surveillance and radiological monitoring activities. You quoted part of a sentence contained in this paragraph of my testimony:

As we consider the limited amount of funding provided by the Section 177 Agreement for scientific work, my government recognizes that the nationwide radiological survey may have to be underfunded and that it may not be possible to survey the entire nation in the same detail that was applied in the 1978 survey of selected northern islands and atolls for which DOE expended \$5.1 million and benefited from significant in-kind contributions of transport and personnel from the U.S. Department of Defense. When the scientific advisory panel meets in its inaugural meeting later this month, the principal topic on its agenda will be the methodology for conducting a comprehensive survey on a comparatively small budget. In a planning document currently being circulated amongst the Scientific Advisory Panel, the option of a nationwide helicopter survey, similar in method to the 1978 DOE survey, is tentatively priced at \$4.4 million. Other, less expensive options are also under consideration.

Inasmuch as the opinion I expressed last November is central to your letter, I feel obligated to provide you with further explanation.

A year ago, in order to obtain guidance as I and other government officials were developing preliminary plans for the nationwide study, we sought cost estimates for various approaches for measuring levels of radioactivity throughout the nation. On March 23, 1989, I wrote to United States Representative Samuel B. Thomsen requesting technical assistance from the U.S. Department of Energy (DOE) in the form of a feasibility study that would outline the options and attendant costs for conducting a nationwide survey of radiological conditions. Upon receiving this request, DOE arranged for such a report to be prepared by EG&G Energy Measurements, Inc. EG&G was the technical firm that provided aerial measurements for DOE during the 1978 survey of the northern Marshall Islands. A copy of the EG&G report is attached. This report served as the basis for the portion of my testimony quoted above.