HEARING
BEFORE THE
COMMITTEE ON
ENERGY AND NATURAL RESOURCES
UNITED STATES SENATE
NINETY-FIFTH CONGRESS
FIRST SESSION
ON
H.R. 6550
AN ACT TO AUTHORIZE CERTAIN APPROPRIATIONS FOR THE TERRITORIES OF THE UNITED STATES, TO AMEND CERTAIN ACTS RELATING THERETO, AND FOR OTHER PURPOSES
JUNE 15, 1977
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STATEMENT OF GLENN H. ALCALAY, FORMER PEACE CORPS VOLUME, TRUST TERRITORY OF THE PACIFIC ISLANDS

Mr. Alcalay, I am a Peace Corps volunteer who was on Utirik Atoll. I have submitted a written statement which I wish included in the testimony. I would just like to say that I am honored to be here on behalf of these people and I ask the committee be as sympathetic as possible when considering compensation and continued medical care for these people in the context of human rights. President Carter, and his administration, are very interested in human rights.

It should be pointed out these people’s human rights have been violated as a byproduct of negligence on the part of this Government. I think these people are continuing to suffer as a result of this negligence. I had a conversation with one of the doctors yesterday. He gave the estimate—it is not clear how long these people are going to suffer.

Senator Metzenbaum. Would you identify yourself?

Mr. Alcalay. Glenn Alcalay, a former Peace Corps volunteer.

Senator Metzenbaum. Are you still on the island?

Mr. Alcalay. No, I just returned from the Marshall Islands.

Senator Metzenbaum. We appreciate your taking the time and trouble in order to be a Peace Corps volunteer, but for the sentiments expressed and I am sure those sentiments are shared by members of this committee as well as by the administration. Unfortunately, money does not always provide answers to some of the problems, but we will try to do the best we can under the circumstances.

[The prepared statement of Mr. Alcalay follows.]

STATEMENT OF GLENN H. ALCALAY, PEACE CORPS VOLUNTEER, TRUST TERRITORY OF THE PACIFIC ISLANDS

I. Glenn H. Alcalay, was a Peace Corps volunteer assigned to the Marshall Islands from the period of March 2, 1973 to May 2, 1977. I served on Utirik Atoll for two years as a cooperative advisor (via-a-via the Department of Agriculture in the Marshalls district), and also as a TESL (teaching English as a second language) teacher.

In the following pages I have summarized some of the major areas which I feel to be of importance in relation to the Utirik people and their ongoing problems as a consequence of having been irradiated in the incident of March 1, 1954.

I. Psychological effects of radiation on Utirikese

(a) The people of Utirik generally believe that they are living in a still-radioactive environment, despite the individual physicians’ and ERDA/Brookhaven’s claims to the contrary. This lack of trust stems from the doctors telling the people that “everything is alright now” in juxtaposition with an increased number of radiation-related illnesses in recent years.

(b) There is a family living in Utirik (Nake family) who was not residing on Utirik Atoll at the time of the incident on March 1, 1954. This family had been living on adjacent Aihuk Atoll, but did however accompany the rest of the returning Utirikese back to their atoll following their three-month forced evacuation to Kawajalein Atoll after the incident.

Since their return to Utirik in 1954, three people in this family—Juda, Maumo, and Kolebedra—have contracted thyroid tumors that required surgical removal. After having spent 2 years talking with this family on Utirik Atoll, I am convinced that this family sincerely believes their maladies to be a direct result of living on Utirik Atoll, especially since they returned with the Utirikese so soon after the incident to an environment that still contained “poison” (radiation).
The way the Senate Bill 1192 is presently written, these people would not receive compensation because of their not having lived on Utirik Island on March 1, 1954.

(c) There is a woman named Arta (Rison) who was exposed to the radiation in 1954. She expressed her fears to me that since she received "poison" (radiation), and since her children have all sucked from her breast, that now her children will have received "poison" in their bodies also, despite the fact that they didn't receive direct exposure to the radiation.

(d) During the March 1977 ERDA/Brookhaven survey, four new thyroid nodules were found in the nonexposed Utirik group. Despite flat denials by the examining physicians that these are a result of lingering radiation in Utirik, the people are convinced that these new cases are also a result of the radiation on Utirik. Whether these four new cases are indeed related to lingering radiation on Utirik or are merely coincidental disorders unrelated to radiation, the Utirik people think that these new cases are a result of the lingering radiation on their island.

(e) Many women I spoke with during my 2 years on Utirik expressed fears of either increased infertility or an increase in the number of stillbirths and miscarriages. Several women also expressed their fear of giving birth again to "grapes", as so many of them had done immediately following the incident in 1954, despite the fact that ERDA's physicians have continually told them not to worry about these problems.

II. Environmental effects of radiation on Utirik

(a) The people of Utirik are convinced that there are lasting effects of the radiation. The arrowroot ("makomak") stalks of Utirik are much shorter than before, and the people feel that this is a result of the radiation. I had a recent talk with the director of agriculture for the Marshall Islands District (Liik), and although he personally felt there to be no relationship between the damaged arrowroot in Utirik and the radiation, he did relate an interesting conversation he had had with Dr. Conrad on Bikini Atoll in 1954 following the incident. Liik tells me that Dr. Conrad asked that three things be placed on the "prohibited list" following the incident in 1954: 1) A certain species of reef fish, 2) the coconut crab (considered a delicacy by the Marshallese), and 3) arrowroot. It is interesting that arrowroot—one of the prohibited items according to Dr. Conrad—is believed to be presently damaged as a result of the radiation in the minds of the Utirik people.

(b) There are a few mutant strains of breadfruit and coconut trees on Utirik Island, and although these may indeed be random mutation and unrelated to the radiation, the people of Utirik are convinced that these mutations are directly related to the radiation.

(c) The important point here is that the people of Utirik sincerely believe that these effects are a result of the radiation, whether or not these effects are indeed the result of the radiation.

III. Physiological effects of radiation on Utirik

(a) It is medically accepted that there are serious physiological ill-effects in the Utirik people, however, there is still some question about the character and extent of these effects. E.g., thyroid tumors are continuing to manifest after 23 years. I think it is instructive to look at Dr. Conrad's own words in his 20-year medical report where he states on page 76: "...That the thyroid effects may not yet be manifest." This should be kept in mind when considering the question of compensation and continued medical treatment for these people. It is rather curious that a cut-off date of 1957 for compensation was included in the Senate bill, and the "full settlement" clause included in the House bill, in light of an indefinite prognosis and increased number of radiation-related diseases.

(b) Two people from Utirik were air-evacuated after the March 1977 medical survey revealed suspected cases of skin cancer. I would like to know if these two people did indeed manifest skin cancer as suspected. My curiosity stems from the mention by Dr. Conrad on page seventy-three of his twenty year medical report that there may be incidence of late-occurring skin cancer as a result of the radiation.
(c) Life shortening is a manifestation of a dysfunctioning thyroid gland. There were some cases of stunted growth on Rongelap Aitoll following the incident of March 1, 1954, and I am wondering if either of these two problems are continuing today.

(d) Winton Kel, the son of two Uitiri exposed persons who was born three years after the incident has recently been operated on for a malignant thyroid tumor. The burden of proof appears to lie with the doctors that Winton's malignancy was unrelated to genetic inheritance.

Senator METZENBAUM. Congressman Balos, I am about to wind up this hearing.

Mr. BALOS. Mr. Chairman, I would like to point out we have a general statement that was submitted earlier, but because of certain developments we would like to revise it for the record at a later date on the bill before us, section 2 under Senate bill 1192, the section be amended to say each person be awarded the maximum of $750,000. We feel this would be a comparable sum awarded to a citizen within the United States.

Another section be amended to award for radiation—

Senator METZENBAUM. I am sorry, Congressman, I have another commitment in 5 minutes. I must be there.

Mr. BALOS. I would like to submit it for the record.

Senator METZENBAUM. We certainly appreciate your doing so. We appreciate the presence of all who have come long distances to be with us here this morning.

Is the Department committed to full implementation of the CIP program in which the Congress of Micronesia has based its request?

Mrs. VAN CLEVE. It is my understanding it is.

Senator METZENBAUM. Will you provide the committee with a breakdown of the expenditures for the trust territories I previously suggested?

Mrs. VAN CLEVE. We certainly will.

[Subsequent to the hearing, the following was received for the record:]

TRUST TERRITORY OF THE PACIFIC ISLANDS
ESTIMATED OPERATIONS EXPENDITURES

(Thousands of dollars)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>1977</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Direct</td>
<td>588</td>
<td>586</td>
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<tr>
<td>High Commissioner's Office</td>
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<tr>
<td>Judiciary</td>
<td>862</td>
<td>826</td>
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<tr>
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<td>520</td>
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<td>Total</td>
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<td>52,011</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
(90 Stat. 263) have been met and approved as required in section 1003(b) thereof, there is hereby authorized to be appropriated $13,515,000 for the government of the Northern Mariana Islands. When such conditions are met, the appropriations authorized in article VII, section 704, of said covenant shall become effective.

Sec. 103. In addition to amounts heretofore authorized, there are hereby authorized to be appropriated such amounts as may be necessary to fully satisfy all adjudicated claims and final awards made by the Micronesian Claims Commission for payment of 50 per centum of each award made under title I, and in full payment of the awards made under title II of the Micronesian Claims Act of 1974 (85 Stat. 96).

Sec. 104. 103. For the rehabilitation and resettlement of Enewetak Atoll in the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands there is hereby authorized to be appropriated $12,400,000 (July 1976 prices) plus or minus such amounts, if any, as may be justified by reason of ordinary fluctuations in construction costs as indicated by engineering cost indexes applicable to the types of construction involved.

Sec. 105. 104. (a) In addition to appropriations authorized to compensate inhabitants of Rongelap Atoll and Utirik Atoll in the Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands for radiation exposure sustained by them as a result of a thermo-
nuclear detonation at Bikini Atoll in the Marshall Islands on March 1, 1954, pursuant to the Act of August 22, 1964 (78 Stat. 598), effective October 1, 1977, there are authorized to be appropriated such amounts as may be necessary to carry out the provisions of this section and the Secretary of the Interior (hereafter in this section referred to as the "Secretary") is authorized and directed to make the payments as hereafter provided in this paragraph to individuals, or to their heirs or legatees, as the case may be, who were on March 1, 1954, residents on Rongelap Atoll or Utirik Atoll in the Marshall Islands.

(1) The Secretary shall pay $25,000 to each such individual from whom the thyroid gland or a neurofibroma in the neck was surgically removed, or who has developed thyroid atrophy resulting in myxedema, or or who has developed hypothyroidism, or who develops a radiation-related malignancy, such as leukemia,

(2) The Secretary shall pay $1,000 to each individual who, on such date, was a resident on Utirik Atoll, and

(3) Where circumstances warrant, as he shall determine, the Secretary shall pay an amount not in excess of $25,000 as he determines to be appropriate compassionate compensation to each such individual who has suffered any physical injury or harm from a radia-
tion-related cause but who is not an individual described
in paragraph (1) or (2) (1).

(4) In addition to the payments provided in para-
graphs (1), (2), and (3) of this subsection, the Sec-
retary shall provide by appropriate means adequate
medical care and treatment for any person who has a
continuing need for the care and treatment of any
radiation injury or illness directly related to the thermo-
nuclear detonation referred to in paragraph (a) of this
section. The costs of such medical care and treatment
shall be assumed by the Administrator of the Energy
Research and Development Administration.

(5) Not later than December 31, 1980, the Secre-
tary shall report to the appropriate committees of the
United States Congress for their consideration what,
if any, additional compassionate compensation may be
justified for those individuals continuing to suffer from
injuries or illnesses directly related to radiation resulting
from the thermonuclear detonation referred to in
paragraph (a) of this section.

In the case of the demise of any individual entitled to receive
payment under this section who expires before receiving
such payment, the Secretary shall pay the amount which
that individual would have been entitled to receive under
this section to the heirs or legatees of such individual, in