

TRUST TERRITORY OF THE PACIFIC ISLANDS  
PUBLIC HEALTH DEPARTMENT  
MAJURO, MARSHALL ISLANDS

726339

WASHINGTON NATIONAL RECORDS CENTER  
REPOSITORY

COLLECTION 32681-C

BOX No. 1

FOLDER N/A

August 16, 1957

Robert A. Conard, M. D.  
Brookhaven National Laboratory  
Upton, N.Y.

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Dear Dr. Conard,

Mr. Neas's letter of July 16, 1957 should have brought you enough information about the Rongelapese up until then.

wife was discharged from the Naval Hospital at Kwajalein sometimes ago and is now staying at Ebeye awaiting transportation back to Rongelap. I understood they performed D&C on her to confirm diagnosis of hydatiform mole and rule out malignancy. Since we did not hear anything further on her from Kwaj. Naval Hospital, I guess there is no evidence of malignancy noted.

On July 7, 1957 upon learning that wife was to have a D & C done at Kwaj., I quickly sent out on an Air Force plane that happened to visit here at the time, copies of the medical instructions you had left with me to the Distad Representative at Ebeye with copies to the medical practitioner, and the Senior Medical Officer, NavSta, Kwajalein, so they could know what to do on emergencies, and where to send biopsy or autopsy specimens if they were to do any on the Rongelapese. Whether the Navy doctors send scrapie from the D & C performed on wife to the Commanding Officer, U. S. Naval Radiological Defence Laboratory at San Francisco Naval Shipyard or to you as directed, I do not know. Probably you could inquire about the matter yourself.

On July 17, 1957, we received an emergency dispatch from Rongelap notifying us of a death on JBILAN, an elderly man of 76 years. We immediately sent a dispatch to Jack Tobin who is now acting as Distad Rep. Ebeye, to arrange with the Navy for an autopsy according to AEC ( your ) instructions which I had recently sent. We indicated that the deceased was a member of the group in the fallout. However if autopsy was refused, we suggested the medical practitioner investigate facts as to cause of death.

The same day we got words from Rongelap that the man died of lobar pneumonia. I was not satisfied with the stated cause and inquired full information of illness and other pertinent facts leading to death.

We got no words until a week later when finally Maynard and myself strongly recommended Jack request the Navy have him and a doctor flown up to Rongelap gather information. Enclosed is a copy of what Dr. Jamar reported on the deceased with his impression as to the cause of death. (Enclosure 1.)

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Very recently Jack Tobin arrived at Ebeye about the case. He stated that the Navy at Kwajalein from the AEC to perform any autopsies. Are they required without prior notice from you? That was one reason of their delay in sending a flight up to Rongelap to investigate this death. If the death had occurred here, we would have tried our best to perform an autopsy. I believe it is up to you to clarify this matter with the Navy at Kwajalein through their Commanding Officer and the Senior Medical officer of the Navy Hospital there. Our medical practitioner cannot do it at Ebeye. He does not have an x-ray unit for skeletal roentgenographic survey nor equipped to perform a complete autopsy as you desire.

Enclosed for your information is a copy of Tobin's report during his recent visit to Rongelap. Medical needs are always taken care of as priority means (Enclosure 2).

Another confusion has resulted about health-aide Jorulej's pay. The understanding we have here was that you were going to pay him through your Liaison Officer at the NavSta., Kwajalein. We notified our Distad Rep. at Ebeye to contact the AEC Liaison Officer at Kwaj. and he said they have no notification from AEC about the matter. Since [redacted] began his duties at Rongelap during the latter part of June, we thought that AEC can begin paying him as of July 1, 1957.

Could you confirm this agreement for [redacted] pay and notify your Naval Liaison Officer at Kwajalein for action with a copy to us at Majuro? We are going to keep [redacted] on our pay roll until final confirmation is received from you. We hope you can do this at your earliest convenience.

Everything else is fine here.

We are looking forward for your next visit. I assure you you will get all our co-operation and help when you visit Majuro to check on the kita controls.

Sincerely,

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A. Hicking, M.P.  
Dist. Director of Public Health

Enclosures (1) & (2).

cc: Nicom TerPacis  
Director of Public Health, TerPacis  
District Administrator, Marshalls  
Distad Representative, Ebeye  
Liaison Officer, Rongelap

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