

NUCLEAR FALLOUT/NUCLEAR DECONTAMINATION OF NAVAL VESSELS ON GUAM

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My name is Robert Namauleg Celestial, Sgt. U.S. Army Retired (DAV), serving in the United States Army from 1975 to 1983. I am a Disabled American Veteran/Atomic Veteran. In 1977, I was assigned to the 84th Engineers Battalion in Hawaii and attached to Enewetak Atoll and stationed on Lojwa Island to clean up post-war debris. We were there to build a large dome on the island of Runit and fill it in with tons of radiated debris (soil). In the process of complying with this directive, many in my battalion got sick on a weekly basis, presumably from exposure to the highly radioactive soil; however, this immediate physical reaction to radiation poisoning is nothing compared to the long-range devastating effects that many of my fellow army colleagues have suffered from. I have learned that many have fallen ill prematurely, suffering with lung cancer, tumors, and other terminal type diseases, 20, 30, even 40 years prior to the time such diseases usually come upon one in old age.

Personally, I have been suffering from numerous radiation related diseases, (i.e., severe guttate psoriasis, rheumatoid arthritis, psoriatic arthritis, gout, bone degeneration, liver damage, post traumatic stress syndrome (PTSD), and reflux of the digestive system). To the U.S. government's credit, the Department of Veteran's Affairs has taken good care of my medical needs the best that they can. Yet my disabilities prevent me from living a "normal, productive life" as I should have been able to do for the next twenty to thirty years, had I not been exposed to the effects of radiation fallout on the Marshall Islands some 25 years ago. Hence, I am confined to limited physical activity for the rest of my abbreviated life, constantly being under medical treatment to sustain what life I have left to live.

As an Atomic Veteran, I have become active in trying to inform more civilians and veterans who lived and/or served in the Pacific region during the time of the blasts and in the immediate years that followed, that they too may have been unduly contaminated by nuclear fallout; by raising awareness of possible medical conditions caused by this radiation exposure, it is hoped that we can identify a large body of individuals and document the abnormal rate of deterioration in health brought on by earlier contamination from these nuclear tests. Thereupon, the U.S. government will have to realize its obligation to provide financial compensation to those who are suffering due to their negligence. Only with these funds can exposed individuals afford to get the proper medical care and subsistence support that they so aptly deserve. Under the Radiation Exposure Compensation Act of 1990, those that have been affected with cancer due to radiation poisoning can apply for compensation in accordance with the Department of Justice and the eligibility and criteria in the CFR Title 28: downwinder's compensation is \$50,000 while on-site participants receive \$100,000.

Most recently, I and others have been able to put together an impressive package of information that clearly explains how the contamination traveled from the Marshall Islands to Guam on prevailing jet streams during the multiple test blasts; further, we collected recently declassified U.S. government documents that show how and when Guam was used as a decontamination site for naval ships that were exposed to massive amounts of radiation fallout during the nuclear/hydrogen bomb testing from 1946 to 1958 in the Marshall Islands.

It has taken two years to convince local leaders, i.e., the Governor, legislature, and U.S. Congressperson, to finally draft a petition to the U.S. government. The 27th Guam Legislature passed Resolution No. 30 (LS) with a full body of support to "Petition the United States Congress to amend the Radiation Exposure Compensation Act of 1990, Public law 101-426, as amended by Public law 101-510, S3139 (42 U.S.C. 2210) and Public Law 106-245, to include Guam in the jurisdictions (downwinders/on-site participants) covered by the Act.

Guam's Congresswoman, Madeleine Z. Bordallo, has presented the legislature's request and it has been received and documented on the Congressional Record of the U.S. House of Representatives; additionally, I have filed a written testimony to her and the Chairman of the Committee of Resources, Congressman Richard W. Pombo, requesting an opportunity to speak before his committee on behalf of all the innocent

victims of radiation contamination living here on Guam. So far I have not received a response to my request of some months ago.

Undaunted, I have begun to meet regularly with a group of cancer survivors here on Guam, who have begun to call themselves, the Pacific Association for Radiation Survivors (PARS). Our mission is to advocate and educate the people of Guam about the Radiation Exposure Compensation Program. We plan to conjoin our group with others who have suffered needlessly due to nuclear testing programs by the U.S. government: these groups include, the National Association for Radiation Survivors, Atomic Veterans, as well as other downwinder associations in the United States. Regrettably, we are very far from the U.S. mainland; consequently, it is very hard for our voice to be heard in Congress.

One of the reasons I agreed to participate in this case study project was to humbly ask for each and every reader of this case study to actively urge the relevant U.S. government leaders (some mentioned above) to exhibit genuine compassion for survivors of what has been referred to as the “American holocaust” and provide fair compensation for those exposed to radiation during government testing. It is worth noting that some movement along these lines has begun as nuclear test radiation survivors in the areas of Colorado, New Mexico, Utah, Arizona, Nevada, and Alaska have been added to the Radiation Exposure Compensation Act just two years ago, and benefits have been awarded to victims of radiation exposure; unfortunately, Micronesia (including Guam) has not been added to this list and accordingly, no federal money has been awarded to nuclear fallout survivors in this area.

I find this omission odd, given that Guam has been the repeated subject of investigation for nuclear fallout over the years, with tests looking for Strontium 90, Cesium 137, Iodine 131 — residue elements of radiation contamination. The University of Washington’s Radioecological Studies in the Marshall Islands, 1946-1977 (Lauren R. Donaldson, Allyn H. Seymour, and Ahmand E. Nevissi, *Journal Health Physic*, vol. 73 no.1, 1997: 214-222) states, “Guam and Palau are in the North Pacific Equatorial Current System, the Gulf of Siam is not. In terms of gross beta activity of the plankton samples, the Guam samples were very much greater than the other two and Palau was greater than the Gulf of Siam. (Radioactivity of the Gulf of Siam samples was no greater than would be expected from naturally occurring radioisotopes.) There was a major peak at Guam in January 1959 and a minor peak at Palau in August 1958.”(p. 220)

Further, records show that in the 1950s the U.S. NAVCAMS WESTPAC Guam Logo displayed a nuclear symbol over the island of Guam within its seal. Guam was considered a closed location for entry and a security clearance was required for everyone entering Guam and not until 1962 did the lifting of such a requirement come about as an act of Congress. It was lifted when Mr. William (Bill) Daniels was appointed Governor by President John F. Kennedy. Governor Daniels lifted the Security Clearance because he did not believe that a U.S. Territory should be under such restraint.

A further evaluation of the radiological quality of the water on Bikini and Eneu Islands was conducted by V.E. Noshkin, W. L. Robison, K. M. Wong, and R. J. Eagle, in 1975 (*Evaluation of the Radiological Quality of the Water on Bikini and Eneu Islands in 1975*, January 21, 1977, Lawrence Livermore Laboratory University of California/Livermore. Prepared for U.S. Energy Research & Development Administration under Contract No. W-7405-Eng-48). The following table is found in their report on page 10. Dose assessment is based on initial sampling.

Table 3: Strontium 90 in yearly rainfall (pCi/litre).

Island	1968	1969	1970	1971	1972	1973	1974
Wake	.35	.47	.44	.35	.28	.07	.25
Johnston	.36	.51	.26	.54	.14	.05	.68
Guam	.20	.11	.13	.13	.10	.02	.10
Majuro	.11	.09	.14	.09	.03	.006	.06

Note that Guam had higher yields of Strontium 90 than the island of Majuro in the Marshall Islands. Even though Majuro is close to Enewetak Atoll, it has lesser yields of Strontium 90 than the island of Guam.

The recorded testimony of Charles Bert Schreiber, Lt. USN-Retired U.S. Navy, on the fallout of the first Hydrogen Bomb Test is particularly telling in regards to noted contamination found on Guam at the time of the blasts. Lt. Schreiber was the Atomic, Biological, and Chemical Warfare Defense Officer on Guam in October 27, 1952. He states that Guam is being contaminated by radiation fallout on November 3, 1952. (Sworn Testimony: Notary Public in and for Harris County, State of Texas on July 30, 2001; Witnessed by Elizabeth Fariogun, her commission ends April 22, 2003.) Radiation was being detected by his Geiger counter and that the needle went off the scale. He was told by his superior officer to

go back to his work place and not to say anything to anyone and to keep silent.

The United States Atmospheric Nuclear Weapons Test Nuclear Test Personnel Review (Human Radiation Experiments Database: Operation Crossroads 1946, Defense Nuclear Agency Government Pubs. Dept. released Sept. 23, 1984, page142-143, 348-350, 444-447.) states that Apra Harbor and Cocos Lagoon on Guam are being used to decontaminate U.S. Naval ships that were present at Enewetak Atoll during detonations of Nuclear/Hydrogen bombs.

In this last section, I have outline a sample of a long, detailed list of compelling evidence proving that the inhabitants of Guam suffered meaningful and devastating harm, caused directly by the U.S. nuclear test program on the Marshall Islands. For those interesting in viewing more of the findings described in the Action Report completed by the Blue Ribbon Panel Committee commissioned by the 26th Guam legislature, please email me and I will respond with the 90 page document as an attachment: rcgolf@netpci.com.

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