SCOMM

119:19

ALASKA STATE DISTRICT COUNCIL OF LABORERS

Laborers International Union of North America, AFL-CIO

2501 Commercial Drive, Suite 140
Anchorage, Alaska 99501 • 907/276-1640

Public Employee Local 71
Don Valesko, Business Manager
Laborers Local 942
Joe Thomas, Business Manager
Laborers Local 341
Mano Frey, Business Manager

Don Valesko
President
Andrew J. "Bear" Piekarski
Business Manager/Secretary Treasurer

September 14, 1999

Dear Representative Barnes:

We are deeply grateful for your **personal support** and the **Alaska State Legislature's** *unanimous passage* of **SJR 21** 'Relating to workers and family members of workers exposed to radiation during the Amchitka nuclear tests', requesting Congress to fund a medical surveillance program; and the Department of Energy and its subcontractors to resolve pending workers compensation claims and litigation filed by injured workers form Amchitka and the surviving family members of deceased workers at Amchitka; and to amend the *RECA* Act to include *Amchitka Island*, Alaska within its coverage, which sent a strong message to Congress and the Department of Energy.

Having dealt for the past two years, with the Department of Energy [DOE's] numerous efforts to thwart the health issues concerning Amchitka's former Workers, we *finally* obtained a commitment at a meeting in Anchorage on April 6, 1999 with the DOE Deputy Assistant Secretary, Dr. Paul Seligman, that DOE would directly fund the first six months (FY-99) for the State of Alaska to conduct a long over-due Health Monitoring Study of former Amchitka Workers.

HEALTH SURVEILLANCE UPDATE

Health Surveillance of Former Workers at Amchitka Test Site: *Technical Proposal* has been accepted by DOE and we are concurrently requesting (FY-00) direct funding from Congress. The project is designed for three years, and requires continued funding. Dr. Knut Ringen will serve as our project director, who is also responsible for similar programs at Hanford and Savannah River. Boston University conducts a similar program for building trades workers at the Nevada Test Site, and The Center To Protect workers' Rights CPWR at Hanford and Savannah River, and the University of Cincinnati at Oak Ridge. Information that may be relevant to other programs will be shared promptly.

Alaska State Resources include: The Department of Labor, Department of Environmental Conservation, and Health and Social Services, and the UAA/ Institute for Circumpolar Health Studies, and *Alaska's numerous 'Building Trades' unions*, who published Amchitka worker notices in their news reports, and helped to collect many names of former Amchitka workers.

Alaska Native Outreach includes: A/PIA, who is presently conducting a survey of Aleut people affected by the Amchitka Tests, and assistance from numerous Native Organizations including the UAA/ Alaska Native Science Commission.

AMCHITKA FORM: Please find attached an "Amchitka Form" for copying and distribution to family members, friends, constituents (or their survivors), who worked at Amchitka during the 1960's through 1992. Please have the workers (or survivors) provide the inicated information and return to the 'District Council' in order to insure they are included in the Amchitka Health Surveillance Program.

The Alaska State District Council of Laborers and the Amchitka Technical Advisory Group [ATAG] thank you for your invaluable contribution to promote justice for Alaska's Amchitka workers. DOE has come to realize that Alaskan's are a TEAM that could not be put down, but must be reckoned with. On behalf of all the Amchitka Workers, thank you.

Sincerely,

Kevin Dougherty

Sincerely,

A. J. 'Bear' Piekarski

Sincerely,

Bev Aleck

Attachment:

RETURN TO: Local 341
2501 Commercial Dr.
Anchorage, Ak. 99501

-or- Fax to 274-0570

AMCHITKA FORM DATE:_____

NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

_____

City State - Zip

PHONE: _____

DATE OF BIRTH _____

S.S. # _____

When did you work in Amchitka? FROM:_____ TO _____

_____

What contractor or employer did you work for:_____

Which union if any:_____

Job Duties:_____

_____

_____

Did you wear a radiation monitor badge? YES_____ NO_____

Do you have any medical problems?_____

_____

_____

_____

Any Comments:

KODIAK OFFICE
112 MILL BAY ROAD
KODIAK, ALASKA 99615
(907) 486-4925
(907) 486-5264 (FAX)

ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE

STATE CAPITOL
JUNEAU, ALASKA 99801-1182
(907) 465-4925
(800) 821-4925 (TOLL FREE)
(907) 465-3517 (FAX)

SENATOR JERRY MACKIE

SENATE MAJORITY LEADER

April 27, 1999

To: Representative Ramona Barnes, Chair
World Trade and State/Federal Relations

From: Senator Jerry Mackie, Chair
Senate Labor & Commerce
Senate Majority Leader

Re: **SJR 21 – Relating to workers and family members of workers exposed to radiation during the Amchitka nuclear tests.**

I would appreciate your scheduling SJR 21 in the near future. Attached is a packet of materials that we put together on this important and timely issue in the Senate Labor and Commerce Committee.

This bill has been sponsored by the Senate Labor and Commerce Committee by request of the civilian workers and family members of these workers exposed to radiation during the Amchitka nuclear tests. Bev Alek, widow of Alaskan laborer Nick Alek, has been instrumental in bringing this issue to the forefront on a state and national level where it belongs. Bev is available to testify on this issue, as well as provide other names from Anchorage that may want to testify as well. Her phone number is (907) 276-1640.

Your consideration in scheduling this legislation is greatly appreciated.

SJR 21 – RELATING TO WORKERS AND FAMILY MEMBERS OF WORKERS EXPOSED TO RADIATION DURING THE AMCHITKA NUCLEAR TESTS.

(SPONSOR: SENATE LABOR AND COMMERCE COMMITTEE BY REQUEST

INDEX

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SENATOR JERRY MACKIE

ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE

Press Release

For Immediate Release: April 21, 1999
Contact Person: Jeannie Smith, Legislative Assistant to Sen. Mackie (907) 465-3802

Senate Committee Seeks Benefits for Amchitka Island Workers and Families
Group was excluded from 1990 Radiation Exposure Compensation Act

(Juneau)—The Senate Labor and Commerce Committee Tuesday approved a measure designed to provide benefits to civilian workers and families on Amchitka Island who were exposed to nuclear radiation. Amchitka Island was the site of the largest underground nuclear testing ever conducted by the United States.

"While thousands of others workers exposed to nuclear radiation in other test sites were given benefits under the 1990 Radiation Exposure Compensation Act, this group of workers and their families on Amchitka Island were not," said Senator Jerry Mackie (R-Craig). Mackie chairs the Senate Labor and Commerce Committee, which sponsored Senate Joint Resolution 21. SJR 21 was introduced by the committee on behalf of Alaskan civilian workers, and the families of these workers, exposed to radiation on Amchitka.

"These civilian workers are requesting equal treatment that Atomic Energy Commission (AEC) workers based on Amchitka received. AEC workers and their family members received medical care and death benefits, funded by our tax dollars," said Mackie, noting these benefits were given with "no questions asked."

"Meanwhile, the civilian workers and their families have been all but ignored by our federal government," Mackie said. The U. S. Department of Energy has only recently agreed to check on the health of hundreds of people who were stationed on Amchitka. "The delay by the Department of Energy to recognize these workers must be remedied quickly," said Mackie. "Their health has been jeopardized unnecessarily. They should have been informed as to whether they were in a high risk category, and whether their health conditions were related to Amchitka. If so, they should have been helped to take preventive action."

Mackie publicly recognized and thanked Bev Alek, widow of Alaskan laborer, Nick Alek, for her efforts and success in bringing this issue to the forefront on a state and national level where it belongs.

"SJR 21 provides an opportunity for the Alaska State Legislature to send a strong message of support to our entire Congressional Delegation in their current efforts to seek justice for these Alaskan workers. SJR 21 puts these Alaskan workers on a level playing field with thousands of other workers from test sites around the U.S. who were included in the 1990 Radiation Exposure Compensation Act," said Mackie.

###

FISCAL NOTE No. 1

STATE OF ALASKA
1998 LEGISLATIVE SESSION

Bill Version: SJR 21
(S) Publish Date: 4/21/99

Revision Date (Note if correction)
Title: Wkrs. exposed to radiation/ Amchitka Island
Sponsor: L & C by Request
Requester: Senate L&C Cmte.

Dept. Affected: none
BRU
Component
Component Serial No.

Expenditures/Revenues (Thousands of Dollars)

OPERATING EXPENDITURES	FY 99	FY 00	FY 01	FY 02	FY 03	FY 04
Personal Services						
Travel						
Contractual						
Supplies						
Equipment						
Land & Structures						
Grants & Claims						
Miscellaneous						
TOTAL OPERATING	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0
CAPITAL EXPENDITURES						
CHANGE IN REVENUES ( )						

FUND SOURCE (Thousands of Dollars)

1002 Federal Receipts						
1003 GF Match						
1004 GF						
1005 GF/Program Receipts						
1037 GF/Mental Health						
Other (Specify Type)						
TOTAL	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0	0.0

Estimate of any current year (FY98) cost:

POSITIONS

Full-time						
Part-time						
Temporary						

ANALYSIS: *(Attach a separate page if necessary)*

Prepared by: Senator Jerry Mackie, Chair L&C Cmte. Phone 465-3844
Division: Alaska State Legislature Date 4/20/99
Approved by Agency: Date 4/20/99

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REQUESTOR STATEMENT

SJR 21 – RELATING TO WORKERS AND FAMILY MEMBERS OF WORKERS EXPOSED TO RADIATION DURING THE AMCHITKA NUCLEAR TESTS.

SJR 21 HAS BEEN INTRODUCED ON BEHALF OF THE ALASKAN WORKERS AND THE FAMILY MEMBERS OF THESE WORKERS EXPOSED TO RADIATION DURING THE AMCHITKA NUCLEAR TESTS.

FOLLOWING THE DEATH OF ALASKAN LABORER NICK ALECK FROM MYELOGENOUS LEUKEMIA, HIS WIDOW, BEV ALECK, HAS FOUGHT FOR YEARS TO GET STRAIGHT ANSWERS ON HER HUSBAND'S DEATH AND THE HEALTH HAZARDS ALL WORKERS FACED FROM THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT'S NUCLEAR TESTS. BEV ALECK HAS BEEN INSTRUMENTAL IN SECURING THE SUPPORT OF THE STATE'S CONGRESSIONAL DELEGATION AND GOVERNOR KNOWLES. THIS IS THE OPPORTUNITY FOR THE ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE TO JOIN MRS. ALEK IN SUPPORT OF THESE WORKERS AND THEIR FAMILIES.

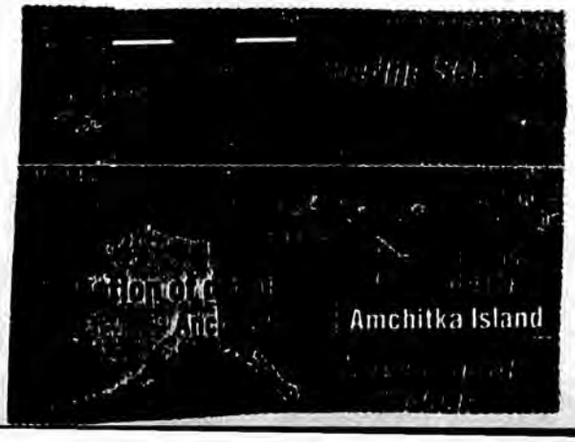
THREE UNDERGROUND NUCLEAR BLASTS WERE CONDUCTED ON AMCHITKA (NEAR THE END OF THE ALEUTIAN CHAIN) BEGINNING IN 1965. THE THIRD, A 5-MEGATON WARHEAD TEST CALLED "CANNICAN" IN 1971, WAS THE LARGEST UNDERGROUND ATOMIC EXPLOSION EVER CONDUCTED BY THE U.S.

ALASKAN WORKERS ARE REQUESTING EQUAL TREATMENT THAT ATOMIC ENERGY COMMISSION (AEC) FEDERAL WORKERS BASED ON AMCHITKA FOR A PERIOD OF TIME RECEIVED. THE AEC FEDERAL WORKERS ON AMCHITKA DEVELOPED RADIATION RELATED CANCERS, SOME ARE DECEASED; **THESE WORKERS AND THEIR FAMILIES RECEIVED MEDICAL CARE AND DEATH BENEFITS UNDER TITLE 5 U.S. CODE,** FUNDED BY OUR TAX DOLLARS, WITH NO QUESTIONS ASKED. AT THIS SAME TIME, THE ATOMIC ENERGY COMMISSION WITHHELD CLASSIFIED DOCUMENTS DENYING ALASKAN WORKERS THE OPPORTUNITY TO "PROVE" THEIR RADIATION EXPOSURE. **THIS IS NOT FAIR OR JUST AND THE AEC NEEDS TO MAKE AMENDS IMMEDIATELY.**

THE U.S. DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY HAS VERY RECENTLY AGREED TO CHECK ON THE HEALTH OF HUNDREDS OF PEOPLE WHO WORKED ON THIS UNDERGROUND NUCLEAR TESTING PROGRAM AT AMCHITKA THREE DECADES AGO. IT IS IMPORTANT FOR THE ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE TO RECOGNIZE THESE WORKERS AND SUPPORT THEM IN THIS PROCESS. THE DELAY BY THE DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY TO RECOGNIZE THESE WORKERS IS INEXCUSABLE. THE HEALTH OF THESE WORKERS HAS BEEN JEOPARDIZED UNNECESSARILY; THEY SHOULD HAVE BEEN INFORMED SO THAT THEY COULD PROPERLY UNDERSTAND WHETHER THEY ARE IN A HIGH RISK CATEGORY, HAVE HEALTH EFFECTS FROM THEIR AMCHITKA WORK, AND IF SO, TAKE PREVENTIVE ACTION.

THE U.S. DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY AND THE DEPARTMENT'S SUBCONTRACTORS ARE REQUESTED TO RESOLVE THE PENDING WORKER COMPENSATION CLAIMS AND LITIGATION FILED BY INJURED WORKERS FROM AMCHITKA AND THE SURVIVING FAMILY MEMBERS OF DECEASED WORKERS. THE ALASKA STATE LEGISLATURE IS ALSO REQUESTING CONGRESS TO AMEND THE 1990 RADIATION EXPOSURE COMPENSATION ACT OF 1990 TO INCLUDE AMCHITKA ISLAND, ALASKA, WITHIN ITS COVERAGE.

SJR 21 PUTS ALASKAN WORKERS FROM THE AMCHITKA NUCLEAR TEST SITE ON A LEVEL PLAYING FIELD WITH THOUSANDS OF OTHER WORKERS FROM TEST SITES AROUND THE U.S. WHO WERE INCLUDED IN THE 1990 RADIATION EXPOSURE COMPENSATION ACT.



Attachment
Press Release

ALASKA STATE DISTRICT COUNCIL OF LABORERS

Laborers International Union of North America, AFL-CIO

2501 Commercial Drive, Suite 140
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Business Manager/Secretary Treasurer

Press Release
3-31-98

RADIATION EXPOSURE REPORT ON AMCHITKA WORKERS BACKS ALASKA LABORERS CALL FOR WORKER HEALTH MONITORING

Today, the Alaska Laborers released a report from world-renown Radiation expert Dr. Bertell[1] which documents the concerns that workers at the Amchitka Nuclear Test sites have potentially been exposed to health-threatening radionuclides. The report represents the workers own efforts to review their radiation exposure levels, since the government has failed to act yet on the workers concerns.

Following the unexpected death of Alaska laborer Nick Aleck from myelogenous leukemia, his widow Mrs. Bev Aleck has fought for years to get straight answers on her husbands death and the health hazards all workers faced from the federal government's nuclear tests, Long Shot, Milrow and Cannikin, 1965 - 1973. Other affected Amchitka workers (include those civilians employed on the the Navy's Over-The-Horizen Radar site in the 1980's - 1990's), and their widows have also been suspicious of the inordinately high rate of cancers associated with radiation exposure.

The Alaska Laborers are frustrated with the failure to date of the DOE, or anyone in the federal government, to take any constructive action to conduct a medical survey of the people, or

---

[1] Dr. Rosalie Bertell Ph. D. currently serves as President of the International Institute of Concern For Public Health since 1987. Dr. Bertell has also served as a consultant to U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission; the President's Committee on Three Mile Island, the Marshall Island's nuclear test review; and served on the Permanent People's Tribunal for the Bhopal India (Union Carbide disaster) in 1992 - 1994. She has also published over 90 public health articles including Worker exposure to Ionizing Radiation as well as the Chernobyl Nuclear disaster. Since 1951 she has been a member of the Grey Nuns of the Sacred Heart.

study the workers' health directly, or provide preventative medical care. Nothing helpful has been done.

***

For the Union A.J. Bear Piekarski said, " I worked in the Amchitka Cannikin shaft with Nick Aleck and others who have either died or now have cancers. I was the Job steward then and they told us there was no radiation-exposure -- now we know different from the feds own declassified documents! The government needs to come clean with Alaskans on this and remember these are People we're talking about. The feds are now studying Amchitka's (Atomic Tests) affect on the TUNDRA, how about the PEOPLE!"

The union's attorney Kevin Dougherty repeated the call for DOE to step forward and fund a medical survey of the workers health. "From the government's own documents we can see that a study of the workers is absolutely warranted so we may determine the level of health effects and precautions the people should take. We should not underreact or overreact, but must responsibly inform these workers about their health. Time is critical to human health so we can't have further delay. We need to get immediate review of these workers. And as the responsible party DOE must step forward."

Specifically, the Dr. Bertell Report reveals an exposure to Ionizing Radiation by Amchitka workers from:

* **Tritium Contaminated groundwater rained on the miners. [F-G]**

* **Cesium 137 vials "lost" in the shaft walls [470 mCi] in July 1969. [A-1]**

* **Neutron Tracer materials and Radionuclides stored and handled by workers on site and emplaced in Bomb cavity in August 1971. [A-3] [Fissionable material in the MeV Range]**

* **Krypton 85 & radionuclide gas released in 1972 drill back. [4000 cubic meters] [E]**

Most importantly, for verification purposes Dr. Bertell has relied on the government's own data from its reports and declassified documents.

Dr. Bertell's study concludes (p.8) with the finding that the Amchitka workers were exposed to ionizing radiation above normal background levels of 699 to 17,240 millerems (or more). This contrasts with the International Commission on Radiological Protection public safety level of 100 mrem per year or 5000 mrem worker level (currently 2000 mrem).

The serious health effects of radiation exposure has been codified in the Radiation Exposure Compensation Act of 1990 (and Radiation-Exposed Veteran's Compensation Act of 1988 which lists the "specified diseases" associated with Radiation exposure as:

A. Leukemia (other than chronic lymphocytic leukemia).

B. Cancer of the thyroid.

C. Cancer of the breast.

D. Cancer of the pharynx.

E. Cancer of the esophagus.

F. Cancer of the stomach.

G. Cancer of the small intestine.

H. Cancer of the pancreas.

I. Multiple myeloma.

J. Lymphomas (except Hodgkin's disease).

K. Cancer of the bile ducts.

L. Cancer of the gall bladder.

M. Primary liver cancer (except if cirrhosis or hepatitis B is indicated).

(Listing expanded since RECA enacted in 1990)

With this Report the Alaska Laborers call on DOE to finally take serious the need to get a Medical Surveillance study underway, and to do it promptly. Dougherty said, "Delay may jeopardize worker health and is inexcusable. We need to keep the workers informed so they can properly understand whether or not they have any health effects from their Amchitka work, and then take preventative action where necessary. The proposal submitted to DOE by Dr. Knut Ringen for The Center TO Protect Workers' Rights will develop a medical monitoring program of former Amchitka workers and research their death certificates. This study will be an add-on to the current Hanford and Oakridge nuclear worker's review.[9] Fortunately the Alaskans on the ATAG Committee have been strongly supportive of the workers' request for a Medical Surveillance review.[10] We thank them immensely. Now we trust DOE will finally get underway here."

The Bertell study was conducted at the request of the Alaska State District Council of Laborers, funded by the Laborer's International Union of North America, AFL-CIO, for the purpose of reconstructing radiation dose exposures to Cannikin miners,[a] and all Amchitka Workers during and after the three atomic bomb tests.

The Atomic Energy Commission, (AEC), and its contractors (generally) failed to monitor the radiation exposure of Amchitka union dispatched workers during the three atomic tests and clean up work conducted from 1965 to 1973, in violation of federal safety and health regulations, and Alaska State OSHA law.

(A bonafide epidemiology study cannot be conducted without ALL worker's radiatian exposure records.)

* They decided to monitor, the skiff (instead of the men)[b] to determine the amount of gamma radiation two locations of lost Cesium 137 (imbedded in the shaft) the workers were exposed to, during the cannikin cavity mining 1970-1971, and skiff stoppages.[c]

The workers have demanded these records. Now, DOE declares these monitoring records have been LOST.

* They were required to use special dosimeter devices, at the time Neutron capsule tracers, (or other devices) were emplaced in the bomb cavity during July - August, 1971.[d]

High tech federal personnel were monitored, and the special dosimeter union worker exposure records cannot be found.

* They ran into problems, during the drill-back in 1972, and released a large amount of Krypton 85 gas, without informing the general public or the union workers at the site.[e]

The workers have requested a complete analysis of ALL the elements contained in the 1972 KR-85 radioactive gas release.

* The "Cannikin Papers" classified in the early 1970's, prompted a lawsuit by Congress against the Government. (Patsy Mink v. U.S.)

The workers and ATAG members requested Declassification of the "Cannikin Papers"; and ALL of the elements in the Neutron Capsule Tracers emplaced in the Cannikin bomb cavity; and testing of the water[f,g] during the 1972 drill back, through the Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation (ADEC).[h]

NOTE

Alaska workers are requesting equal treatment. It is known that AEC federal workers based on Amchitka for a period of time, also developed radiation related cancers, or are deceased, but received medical care and death benefits under Title 5 U.S. Code, funded by our tax dollars, with no questions asked. While Alaska workers who were sick or deceased could not obtain their medical care or death benefits because they could not "PROVE" their radiation exposure, due to the AEC withholding classified documents. This is not fair or just, having two classes of American Citizens at the same work site, and DOE needs to make amends post haste.

INTERNATIONAL INSTITUTE OF CONCERN FOR PUBLIC HEALTH
710-264 Queens Quay West, Toronto Ontario M5J 1B5 CANADA
Tel: +1-416-260-0575; Fax: +1-416-260-3404; Email: IICPH@compuserve.com

Testimony Prepared by Rosalie Bertell, Ph. D., GNSH

Estimating the Exposure to Ionizing Radiation Incurred by the Workers at the Amchitka, Alaska Site of Canniken Nuclear Test

Enclosed:

Document 1: Summary of Data on Potential Worker Exposures to Ionizing Radiation, Amchitka, Alaska, 1968 to 1972.

Document 2: Special considerations relative to the former worker, Nick Aleck, who died in 1975 of leukemia.

Document 3: Curriculem Vitae of Rosalie Bertell

I declare that I have prepared these three documents myself, at the request of the Alaska State District Council of Laborers and Bev Aleck, widow of Nick Aleck.

Sworn before:

Robert Bruen

Date: February 13, 1998

Toronto, Ontario, Canada

Sworn by:

Rosalie Bertell

Date: 13 Feb. 1998

Toronto, Ontario, Canada

Summary of Data on Potential Worker Exposures to Ionizing Radiation Amchitka Island, Alaska

SOURCES OF EXPOSURE:

The worker exposures to ionizing radiation at Amchitka, above that due to normal cosmic and terrestrial exposures, were primarily due to:

1. Ground water transport of tritium from the underground nuclear test shot called Longshot.

2. Exposures associated with radioactive sources brought in, stored and moved out of the Birdwell storage structure or elsewhere on the site.

3. Exposures due to working in the shaft and cavity, including those from above normal levels from natural sources in the ground and those due to cesium sources embedded in the wall of the shaft.

4. Exposures related to subsurface diagnostic capsulated sources and the Radioisotope Thermoelectric Generators (RTG's).

5. Material released from the Canniken re-entry operations in 1972.

6. Exposures related to active and/or passive smoking of miners in the shaft and/or cavity.

Each of these potential exposures will be considered separately and then a maximum and minimum exposure estimate for a theoretical worker for one year will be estimated. Ionizing radiation exposures from special assignments and from the Canniken re-entry operation are also considered. It should be noted that exposure to residual radiation contamination of soil and surface water from the two prior nuclear tests on Amchitka was not well documented by managers of the Canniken shot in documents which I examined. Therefore, the estimate here calculated is likely to be conservative, i.e. less than the actual exposure of the Workers.

1. TRITIUM WATER CONTAMINATED FROM LONGSHOT IN SHAFT AND PIT.

Document 7-G, called Project PINOCCHIO, Seal Hunt II - Air and Water Sampling at the Long Shot Site, Amchitka, 13-24 November 1966, by Pierre E. Biscaye, noted significant radioactive krypton and tritiated methane in soil gas and dissolved in surface water near the Amchitka site attributable to Long Shot. Long Shot was an 80 kiloton nuclear device detonated at 2,300 feet depth one year before (1965). Test holes, including UA-1, the shaft for Canniken, were sampled above the 1525 feet depth. Some samples marked UAe were taken at different depths, but all were above 2000 feet deep. These

measurements must have been primarily of air fallout, since the ground water flow would likely be into the next lower aquifer at about 2300 feet. No actual measurements of this contamination were found among the papers I surveyed.

Table 5 "Tritium Content in Amchitka Test-Well Water (NVO-1229-113 Part I) - August and September 1967 - reports tritium in UAE-1 sample ranging from 12 to 97 TU, or equivalently, 39 to 313 pCi/L. This also appears to be surface water measurement

Table II, B. Long Shot Surveillance Network Land, (Document 7-E) measurements in WELL-WL1 for 19 and 27 October 1969, show 930 and 3700 TU respectively. This is equivalent to 3000 to 12,000 pCi/L. The depth at which this sample was collected is not given, but it was presumably below the nuclear explosion affected aquifer. The values for the MUDPIT-A3 were intermediate to these values.

Exhibit 7, "An Interim Summary of Tritium Data for STS "A", Amchitka Island, Alaska July 1,1970 through June 30, 1971" by E. H. Essington (NVO-1229-172, UC-41): It is clear from the data that the tritium measured is not "old water" with about 1 TU, but it has been contaminated with surface water and also, likely ground water, which has been contaminated from Long Shot. At the bottom of the printed part on page 22 there is a notation that tritium was measured at about 20,000 pCi per liter. "Old water", with I TU would be expected to have 3.23 pCi per liter.

Table III Tritium Content of Amchitka Island Water Samples, A. Background network - Land, reports measurements during October and December of 1970, including BC-TAP-WH2 and UA-1, around 30 pCi/L in BC-TAP-WH2, and 3 to 10 pCi in UA-1.

Document 7-L "Hydrogeologic Processes and Radionuclide Distribution in a Cavity and Chimney Produced by the Cannikin Nuclear Explosion, Amchitka Island, Alaska. Geological Survey Professional Paper 712-D, Prepared on behalf of the U.S. Energy Research and Development Administration WELL UAE-1, aquifer 3B, 5000 to 7000 feet depth, reports Gross Beta/gamma as 137 cesium equal to 18. This appears to be background levels before the Canniken shot, since the locations were sampled between 1964 and 1972 at Constantine Spring and between 1967 and 1972 at White Alice Creek. Since the background in UAE-1 was given at 282 cpm gamma (in Document 7-W), one can assume that the beta count was 5076 cpm, or about 85 counts per second. Assuming that this is tritium and the sample was one liter, this would imply about 2300 pCi per liter. I will make the assumption that the water at the bottom of the shaft in UAE-1 contained between 2300 and 20000 pCi/liter tritium. Because of the extreme heat in the pit (see exerpts from the tapes of Nick Aleck, May-August 1971: "It was sure hot down there. It must have been at least 140 degrees."), the tritium would have also been vaporized and inhaled. There is no indication that the men were tested for internal contamination. It would have been wise under the circumstances. Tritium has a relatively short biological half life. However, a fraction of the internal tritium is incorporated into organic molecules, said to be organically bound, and this has a biological half life of about three years.

Using the conversion factor from "Dose-rate conversion factors for external exposure to photon and electron radiation from radionuclides occuring in routine releases from nuclear fuel cycle facilities",

PM

by D.C. Kocher, Health Physics Journal 38: 543-621 (1980), namely immersion in water containing 1 microcurie of tritium per cubic centimeter (or 1 ml) is 5.26 X 10000 mrem per year (or 6 mrem per hour), one can estimate:

> At 2300 pCi or 0.0023 microcurrie tritium per liter, or equivalently, 0.0000023 microcurie tritium per cc, workers in the mine working in the dripping water would be exposed to 0.000014 mrem per hour. Working a ten hour day, seven days a week for three weeks, this would be 0.003 mrem per four week work period. There were 13 such work periods in a year, meaning a likely dose of about 0.038 mrem per year maximum from this source.
>
> At 20000 pCi per liter the exposure would be 0.33 mrem per year.

Certainly some of the tritium would be in the water vapor, and would be breathed or ingested. However, this does not seem to be a major pathway for the average worker's exposure.

2. STORED RADIONUCLIDES ON SITE

Most of the radionuclides used in the operation were stored in the Birdwell Storage Structure. In this structure, according to Document 6-B, Eberline Instrument Report dated 4 September 1968, were scandium 46 and cesium 137. Scandium 46 has an 84 day half-life, and gives of 0.889 MeV gamma. It is highly radioactive and dangerous. There were seven cesium sources: two 35 mCi, giving off about 500 mrem/hr at 5.5 inches; three 200 mCi sources, giving off 1000 mrem/hr at about 7 inches and two 800 mCi sources giving off 4000 mrem/hr at about 7 inches. These are very strong sources. There was, additionally Pu-Be, Radium and Krypton 85.

Certainly workers unloaded these source when they arrived, placed them in storage and removed them periodically for use. Some workers must have supervised the storage facility. It is not believable that personnel radiation badges (TLD's) "nearly all of the time" read zero. General levels of radiation in the storage structure were 5 to 10 mrem/hour. Worker badges were designed to give cummulative exposures over one to three month periods (different time periods for evaluation were given on different documents). Assuming that the workers were involved in activities at the storage structure for, on average, one hour per week, their yearly exposure from this source would be between 250 mrem/year and 500 mrem/year. The maximum weekly exposure according to document 2-B, was 100 mrem/week or 3900 mrem/year. Some of the TLD's were apparently evaluated monthly (21 days of work at 10 hrs a day), and had a minimum detection level of 30 mrem. Therefore 360 mrem dose per year could have occured without detection by using TLD's.

3. BACKGROUND LEVEL OF RADIATION EXPOSURE AND EXPOSURE DUE TO WORKING IN THE SHAFT AND PIT.

Document marked Exhibit 12, dated 3/11/72, notes that background on Amchitka was measured at 30 cpm. This higher count may be due to the high latitude. Generally in the United States the background measurement is 10 to 20 cpm. Background in the shaft as measured in Document 7-W, was noted as 282 cpm for both mud and water at all depths. This is not unusual since all hard rock miners working underground are exposed to uranium ore bearing rock, and higher than normal

exposure to ionizing radiation.

Workers averaged about 4 to 5 hours at a time in the shaft and/or pit at background radiation levels about ten times higher than they would have experienced from background radiation had they stayed on the surface of the island. The men worked ten to twelve hour shifts. My estimate would be that working on the surface of the Island exposed one to about 132 mrem per year background radiation. Working the shaft and/or pit added 0.135 mrem per hour. That is, to the 0.015 mrem/hour which would have been experienced in working on the surface, another 0.120 mrem-hour due the workplace being deep underground was added. At 10 hours per day, 21 days per work period, and 13 work periods per year, this adds 328 mrem/year above normal (surface) background to the worker's ionizing radiation exposure.

Another Document, dated 7/8/71 ODTL reported background radiation levels for the island at 2.3 mrem per week, or 120 mrem per year. This is close to the previous estimate, and using this for background would give 340 mrem per year added exposure due to underground mining environment.

There were two double cesium 137 sources in the wall of the shaft. At 64 feet above or below each of these sources, one embedded at 728 feet and the other embedded at 2341 feet depth, the radiation exposure was about 0.17 mrem/hour. The one foot area centered around the source measured above 3000 mrem/hour. A reasonable estimate of the dose average for the entire 128 feet vertical distance centered at one source would be 12 to 18 mrem per hour. One worker travelling in the man-cage down and up the shaft, once, would pass 4 X 128 feet or 512 feet affected by these two sources.

The entire round trip is 12,000 feet, so the contaminated portion is 4.3%. The total time for a round trip was given as 20 minutes, of which 4.3% or 0.86 minutes are spent in the cesium affected field. If this round trip occured at this rate, without stopping in the shaft, it would add between 0.17 and 0.26 mrem per trip to the worker's exposure. The average velocity of the man cage may have been much slower, based on worker experience of trips lasting one or two hours.

The average worker made two round trips per day (they surfaced for lunch), and they worker 10 hours a day for 21 days per work period, 13 work periods per year. Over the course of the year, the worker would have between 93 and 142 mrem additional exposure, if the round trips were actually accomplished in 20 minutes.

Allowance should be made for unexpected stopage while riding the man cage. Apparently workers did not always wear TLD's while working in the shaft or pit, and individual records of worker's exposures were not kept (or have been lost). About 64 men were employed as miners and they worked in the shaft and pit. The man-cage appeared able to carry 2 to 6 men at a time, usually carrying four or five in one trip. It made about 30 to 36 round trips a day, or 10,000 to 13,000 round trips a year. At a 10% failure rate, one can assume between 1,000 and 1,300 stopages in the shaft in a year, with about 32 to 40 stopages in the vicinity of the cesium sources. Assume also that when the man-cage stopped, it took an average of one hour to get it working again. Stoppage was apparently frequent enough that the radiation protection staff ordered that the eleven ampules of radioactivity to be emplaced in the shaft near the end of the excavation be sent down without a person in the man-cage

so that there was no danger of anyone being stopped in the shaft with these sources.

Just based on random stopage and random place of stopage, one would expect a worker making about 546 trips in the man cage per year, to have experienced 54 stopagges of which 2.3 (on average) were in the vicinity of the cesium sources. Such prolonged time near the sources could result in exposures between 28 and 41 mrem. There would be higher partial body exposure near the center of the radiation field generated by the cesium source. Partial body exposures, for example exposure of an arm or leg, or abdomen, may have been as high as 3000 mrem near the center of the field.

4. EXPOSURE RELATED TO SUBSURFACE DIAGNOSTIC CAPSULED SOURCES AND RADIOISOTOPE THERMOELECTRIC GENERATORS (RTG's)

On or before 15 July 1971, eleven radioactive sources, capsules to be placed in a spherical dodecahedral array in the UAE-1 cavity arrived at Amchitka. They were stored for about five weeks and emplaced the second week of August. Installation required 3 people, who were expected to take 3 hours for emplacing all eleven capsules. Each capsule gave off neutron and gamma radiation. There was no indication in the Document marked Exhibit 8, that a quality factor for neutrons had been used for conversion of mR, as measured, to mrem dose.. For gamma radiation, the mR per hour measured is converted directly into mrem per hour. Neutrons are highly effective at inducing cell transformations, the first step in causing cancers, and are therefore multiplied by 10 when converted into a mrem dose. They are much more cytotoxic and carcinogenic than are gamma rays. There is also evidence that the effectiveness of neutrons increases with a decrease in the dose rate, therefore they are most dangerous when the dose rate is slow or fractionated.(See BEIR V:143-144, US National Academy of Science). According to the testimony of Dr. Jim Corothers on 12 December 1997 (510) 422-7010[LLL] they were fast neutrons, "fast spontaneous fissionable material... in the MeV Range". According to Corothers, the "O ring/ 4" x 1 1/8 Cylinder est. 700 mR/hr neutron".

For assessing the dose from neutrons, a quality factor should be used as a multiplier of the mR dose measured. I will assume the error in the reporting of the neutron dose, given as 48 mrem, since there is no mention of this conversion factor having been used and since under the circumstances, the estimate may be orders of magnitude too low.

Each one of the eleven capsules had a ring, called the "O ring", by which it could be held. In close quarters, I would estimate that the person would hold it about 1 foot from his body, with the capsule coming at about the midline. This midline dose could have been about 3.5 mrem/hr gamma and between 480mrem/hr (48 mR X 10) and 7000 mrem/hour neutron. Over a three hour period about two hours could have been spent actually holding a source by the ring and attempting to place it on the pre-prepared hook. The exercise may have given a radiation dose of 960 to 14,000 mrem. No TLD records for this operation were found, although according to Document 8-E, F., "Personnel dosimeters (TLD) will be worn by all personnel during the downhole installation of the capsules". Personnel were warned to stay at least five feet from the paint can containing the capsules, however this must have been difficult in cramped quarters and with the task of emplacement of each of the eleven capsules on hooks on the shaft and cavity wall.

If the men were being measured against the maximum permissible radiation exposure for members of the public, namely, 500 mrem per year, this job clearly involved an over-exposure. Nuclear workers were at the time permitted a maximum of 5,000 mrem, a limit which also was likely exceeded.

5. MATERIAL RELEASED FROM THE CANNIKEN RE-ENTRY OPERATIONS IN 1972

Exhibits 11, and 11 A through 11 L, refer to measurements made after the Canniken shot. Between January 1 and December 31, 1972, 4000 cubic meters of radioactive gasses were released, in the cleanup. The composition and this gas, and the release timing is given by Eberline:

Exhibit 11. Eberline Instrument Corporation estimated 4000 cubic meters of gases were released during periods in 1972; containing 0.25 curies 85 Kr, 4.0 millicuries HTO, 1.0 curies HT and 0.3 millicuries 14C:

Periods (1972)	Gas Volume (M^3)	Days	Daily Gas Vol.(M^3)
1 Jan - 20 Feb	130	51	2.55
21 Feb - 8 April	630	48	13.13
9 April - 21 May	1100	43	25.58
22 May - 23 July	1710	63	27.14
24 July - 15 Oct	220	84	2.62
16 Oct - 31 Dec	210	77	2.73
TOTAL	4000	366	

The average release of this gas was 11 cubic meters per day. The number of curies of Tritium released, whether as water vapor or tritiated gas, was about 4 times the number of curies of Krypton 85 released. Curies of Krypton released were on average almost 1000 times the number of curies of Carbon 14 released. An assumption is made that the gaseous mixture remained homogeneous over the year. Both Krypton and Tritium would have contributed measurable doses to skin, however, Krypton would have provided the largest whole body dose.

Between 5/25/72 and 6/3/72, 150 cubic feet of gas, containing 1 millicurie of Kr 85 was released. Since 150 cubic feet is about 4.25 x 10E(6) cubic cm, and 1 millicurie is 1,000 microcuries of Krypton, the gas concentration was about 2.35 x 10E(-4) microcuries per cubic cm. According to D.C. Kocher (Health Physics Journal 38:543-621, 1980, page 555), the whole body dose received from immersion in radioactive gas, with this concentration of Krypton 85, would be 1.23 x 10E(7) mrem per microcurie per cubic cm per year. For the release in question, this would be 8 mrem per day (assuming that the workers were exposed over the whole 24 hour period). A worker who spent 30 days on Amchitka, working under these circumstances, would receive about 240 mrem dose.

The combined skin dose from Krypton 85 and Tritium, would have been considerably higher, as much as 66 mrem per hour. Hence workers may later experience skin cancer. Both Krypton and Tritium can be breathed, pass through the lungs to blood and circulated throughout the body. A small portion of the Tritium can be retained in the body, the organically bound fraction, with a half life of 300 days. Dose to

bone marrow from the Krypton, the significant dose in blood and bone disease etiology, would have been 10 mrem per day, or 300 mrem for a 30 day stay on the Island. Some workers may have stayed for as long as 90 days, and others may have stayed for only a few days. This radioactive gas would have been in both the work space and the living space of the Island. Krypton is a heavy gas, chemically inert but radioactive. It would stay close to the earth. It has a half-life of 10.72 years and eventually becomes distributed globally. Spasmodic releases would likely stay in the vicinity of the site for several days in calm weather. With a high wind, it might disperse quickly. I made the conservative assumption that there was no build up of Krypton, that is a complete air change in 24 hours. The doses to workers could have been higher in calm air, or if the gas contained radioactive particulates, and lower if there was a high wind.

Workers were also exposed to the contaminated waste at the cleanup site. There were nine 55 gallon drums measuring 0.57 mR/hour on contact, and five wooden boxes on skids, measuring 0.02 mR/hour. The documents state that: "All Birdwell sources are packaged in accordance with DOT regulations." Certainly the workers handled these sources and did the packaging. The date on 12 B is 16 March 1972, and there is a second Document 12 C which covers 16 July 1972 to 28 July 1972. I am estimating that the cleanup took place over two, two week periods, or over approximately 20 working days. I am also assuming that the handling and packaging of the Birdwell source materials and other miscellaneous cleanup of the contaminated site was at the 100 mrem per day level which was estimated for a workers maximum per week when this material was in storage. For twenty working days, the estimated exposure would be 2000 mrem, in addition to the exposure due to the Krypton gas.

Document 12 B contains a note written by L. O'Neill, relative to: "The Dowell sources (2 blending trucks with 50 mCi Cesium 137 sources) safely packaged, however, in my opinion the package does not meet DOT specifications." This would indicate that the package was physically secure but not properly sheilded. This would also pose a direct radiation exposure hazard for the workers. At about 18.6 cm (8 inches) from this source one would expect doses around 500 mrem per hour. Working around the trucks would have carried a risk of further exposure.

6. EXPOSURES RELATED TO ACTIVE AND/OR PASSIVE SMOKING OF MINERS IN THE SHAFT AND/OR PIT.

I considered the Document dated 1 May 1970, reporting a conversation with Ray Peters, a miner at Amchitka, in which he noted the fire hazard associated with working the shaft. I consider this incident to be a significant indication of poor safety practices at the shaft and pit. According to this dialogue, 110 gallons of oil had been pumped down the air pipe. It went to the bottom of the hole and was blown back up the casing where it mixed with the rust. This rust-oil mixture would burn if touched by a lighted cigarette. Apparently there was at least one fire at 4500 feet depth. This obvious fire hazard which went unchecked indicates an unacceptable level of safety consciousness.

It should be noted further, that there was a hazard for smokers resulting from the leaching of radon gas from the natural rock pierced by the shaft. Radon is about seven times heavier than air and would tend to settle near the bottom of the shaft. It was well known at the time that smokers in uranium and other hard rock mines experienced lung cancers at a higher rate and with a shorter latency period than did non-smokers. This excess for the miners was greater than could be accounted for by smoking alone.

to keep such records, was inexcusable since radiation protection formalities were well established by the late 1960's and early 1970's. The doses received by the men during special assignments and during the post-Canniken cleanup, exceeded the permissible quarterly dose of 1250 mrem and the maximum permissible yearly dose of 5000 mrem. In 1990, the ICRP recommended the reduction of worker exposures to ionizing radiation to below 2000 mrem per year.

Depending on how the doses were calculated, i.e., whether calendar year or work year was used, doses to workers may clearly have exceeded the 5000 mrem yearly maximum with the special assignments.

In my opinion these worker exposures can be expected to result in at least one or two excess radiation induced and radiation promoted cancers, and other ill health among the workers.

Rosalie Bertell

Rosalie Bertell, Ph.D., GNSH
President, International Institute of Concern for Public Health
710-264 Queens Quay West
Toronto ON M5J 1B5 CANADA
Date: 13 February 1998

Biography
Rosalie Bertell, Ph. D., GNSH

Dr. Rosalie Bertell Ph. D. currently serves as President of the International Institute of Concern for Public Health since 1987. Dr. Bertell has also served as a consultant to the U.S. Nuclear Commission; the President's Committee on Three Mile Island, the Marshall Island's nuclear test review; and served on the Permanent People's Tribunal for the Bhopal India (Union Carbide Disaster) in 1992-1994.

Dr. Bertell has also published over 90 public health articles including worker exposure to Ionizing Radiation as well as the Chernobyl Nuclear Disaster. Since 1951, she has been a member of the Grey Nuns of the Sacred Heart.

TONY KNOWLES
GOVERNOR

P.O. Box [illegible]
Juneau, Alaska [illegible]
(907) [illegible]
Fax (907) [illegible]

STATE OF ALASKA
OFFICE OF THE GOVERNOR
JUNEAU

February 19, 1998

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To ED FLANAGAN	From RON CLARKE
Co.	Co.
Dept.	Phone #
Fax #	Fax #

The Honorable Federico F. Peña
Secretary of Energy
U.S. Department of Energy
Office of the Secretary
Washington, DC 20585-1000

Dear Mr. Secretary:

On October 31, 1996, I wrote to then Secretary O'Leary to express my concerns regarding a number of issues associated with the former nuclear test site on Amchitka Island. Your department and our Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) are addressing environmental concerns related to the test site and the surrounding area under an Agreement-in-Principle, but one serious issue which has not been addressed is my request for monitoring of the workers that participated in the actual tests.

These Alaska workers are concerned they suffer from an inordinately high rate of cancer. In fact, several have died of cancer or leukemia. For years, these workers were unable to obtain classified information on the tests in which they were involved. Based on conversations with the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH), union representatives of the Amchitka workers, in coordination with the Center to Protect Workers Rights, submitted on May 5, 1997, a proposal to the Department of Energy (DOE) for a health study. My understanding is the DOE did not formally respond, declining to fund this proposal, until November 5, 1997. Considering the concerns of the surviving Amchitka workers and families of the deceased workers, the length of time the DOE took to respond was unacceptable.

Now I understand the DOE has completed a study of the workers' dosimetry records and other site records, and has passed this information and references along to NIOSH for review by health physicists. Given the workers' concern, time is of the essence; and I am requesting this review be completed as soon as possible. Immediately upon completion, I request the study be shared with the Amchitka workers and the State of Alaska. I will have the Alaska Department of Health and Social Services and DEC review the report and recommendations. A meeting should then be held in Anchorage, Alaska, with the

The Honorable Federico F. Peña
February 19, 1998
Page 2

Amchitka workers, the involved state agencies, DOE, and NIOSH to discuss the report and determine what additional studies may be warranted.

The DOE under the Clinton Administration has an exemplary record of forthrightly confronting problems from the past, and I appreciate the cooperation with which our other Amchitka concerns are being addressed.

If we need to discuss this further, please call me at (907) 465-3500 or have a member of your staff contact John Katz in my Washington, D.C., office at (202) 624-5858.

Thank you for your consideration of this matter.

Sincerely,

Tony Knowles
Governor

VIII

Aleutian/Pribilof Islands Association, Inc.

401 E. Fireweed Lane, Suite 201
Anchorage, Alaska 99503-2111
Phone (907) 276-2700

January 14, 1998

The Honorable Tony Knowles
Governor of the State of Alaska
PO BOX 110001
Juneau, AK 99811-0001

Dear Governor Knowles:

The Aleutian/Pribilof Islands Association, Inc., supports the Amchitka Alaska Workers and the Alaska State District Council of Laborers in their efforts to secure funding from the Department of Energy for a health surveillance study of State of Alaska laborers who worked at the three underground nuclear test sites on Amchitka Island, from 1965-1967. Though a formal health survey of the health conditions of Amchitka workers has yet to be completed, a partial listing of worker health problems has been collected solely by a word-of-mouth process. This list documents a statistically significant number of workers who currently suffer or have died from various forms of cancers associated with radiation poisoning.

In response to Dr. Knut Ringen's proposed health study of Amchitka workers, Ralph Lightner, Director of the Office of Southwestern Area Programs, Department of Energy, states, "a study of this type is not warranted at this time." This is indeed a tragic oversight; a medical study concerning the health of these workers is not only imperative, but long overdue. As a member of the Amchitka Technical Advisory Group (ATAG), and primary stakeholder in the Aleutian/Pribilof Islands Region, we strongly support the enactment of a legislative appropriation to lend justice to a group of dedicated workers who sacrificed greatly for purposes of national security.

Sincerely,

Dimitri Philemonof
Executive Director

DP/sd

cc: Bob King, Press
Tom Cashen, Labor Commissioner-Juneau
Al Dwyer, Labor Standards & Safety Director
Michele Brown, ADEC Commissioner-Juneau
John Katz, Gov. Knowles Washington D.C. Office
U.S. Senator Frank Murkowski
U.S Senator Ted Stevens
Congressman Don Young
State Senator Loren Leman
Dr. Knut Ringen, CPWR
Pam Miller, Greenpeace
Carl Hild, Institute for Circumpolar Health Studies, UAA
Rev Aleck, Alaska Workers
Andy Piekarski, AK State District Council of Laborers
Kevin Dougherty, AK State District Council of Laborers

ADN 4-7-99 Study targets Amchitka workers

By DON HUNTER
Daily News reporter

The U.S. Department of Energy has agreed to check on the health of hundreds of people who worked on an underground nuclear testing program at Amchitka Island three decades ago.

Dr. Paul Seligman, deputy assistant secretary for DOE's Office of Health Studies, said Tuesday in Anchorage that the Amchitka medical surveillance program will be similar to studies already under way of former workers at other U.S. nuclear sites. It will aim to find out if the former workers have suffered diseases thought to be caused by radiation.

The study can begin as soon as agreements with state agencies are drafted and signed, Seligman and state officials said.

Three underground nuclear blasts were conducted on Amchitka, near the end of the Aleutian Chain, beginning in 1965. The last, a five-megaton warhead test called Cannikin in 1971, was the largest underground atomic explosion conducted by the United States.

Along with radioactive substances used in the tests, workers may have been exposed to radiation from nuclear-powered generators, according to a 1998 study performed for the union by Rosalie Bertell, a former consultant to the U.S. Nuclear Regulatory Commission.

Unions representing Amchitka workers have pressured the Energy Department to conduct the study. The state's congressional delegation and Gov. Tony Knowles added their weight last year.

Seligman said Energy Secretary Bill Richardson agrees it's important to respond to former test site employees who worry that work on the island may have lingering health effects.

"He made it clear to my boss that he wants the health concerns of those who worked for DOE to be fairly, appropriately and justly addressed," Seligman said after meeting with state and union officials and a representative from the Aleutian Pribilof Islands Association.

Seligman said attitudes and priorities at his agency have changed since the Amchitka tests were conducted in a Cold War climate.

"These were hazardous opera-

Please see Page B-3, STUDY

STUDY: Nuclear workers to be checked

Continued from Page B-1

ions," he said. "The hazards were well understood, but the priorities were ... weapons production and the defense of the nation."

Energy Department officials have said agency records indicate that Amchitka workers weren't exposed to unusually high levels of radiation. But a number of the workers later developed cancers, including some types often associated with radiation exposure.

Bev Aleck, whose husband, Nick, died of leukemia in 1975 after helping drill the pit for the Cannikin test, has battled to declassify records on the Alaska underground tests. She has worked with union attorneys to enlist political support for the health monitoring program. The attorneys say her efforts helped bring the issue to the attention of government officials.

Since the Alaska State District Council of Laborers called for the survey a year ago, about 200 Amchitka workers have contacted the union, Aleck and Laborers' attorney Kevin Dougherty said Tuesday. Many still live in Alaska, but others are scattered across the country.

No one has reliably calculated the number of miners, construction workers and scientists who worked on the island, digging pits for the underground blasts and installing equipment to monitor the explosions, but as many as 2,000 may have been involved.

"The (first) major task is getting together lists of who was at the site, and locating them," Dr. James Mellius, an occupational medicine specialist with the Laborers Health and Safety Fund. "Then interviewing them: How long were they there? .... What did they do?"

Union officials plan to comb pension rolls for members who worked on the island. Aleck said Amchitka workers had to receive security clearances before getting jobs, so the Energy Department should have those names somewhere.

The effort to locate Amchitka workers can begin as soon as an "agreement in principle" is reached between the Energy Department and the state, said Doug Dasher, environmental radiation program manager for the Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation. Legislative action to accept and appropriate the federal funding also is necessary.

Everything should be ready and the survey in progress by mid-summer, or at the latest by September, Dasher said.

Reporter Don Hunter can be reached at dhunter@adn.com.

ACAT

Alaska Community Action on Toxics

May 6, 1999

Thank you for the opportunity to testify today. I also want to thank members of the HOUSE SPECIAL COMMITTEE ON WORLD TRADE & STATE/FEDERAL RELATIONS for holding this hearing on Joint Resolution No. 21. I strongly support passage of SJR 21. My name is Pamela K. Miller, Program Director of Alaska Community Action on Toxics and biologist.

As a member of the Amchitka Technical Advisory Group (ATAG), I am familiar with the great difficulties the workers and their families have had in finding the truth about radiation hazards at Amchitka in the years during and following the nuclear tests. I have personally received many calls from Amchitka workers and their family members who express concerns about the high incidence of cancers and other health problems that arose among workers after their employment on the island. I have reviewed over 20,000 documents in my research concerning the nuclear tests at Amchitka and have found documentation of radioactive sources and leakage that workers were likely exposed to. Department of Energy still withholds classified documents which would provide additional and much needed information for assessing environmental and human health threats.

A worker medical surveillance program will provide workers and their families with information essential to understanding the health impacts of the nuclear tests at Amchitka. I also voice my support for the amendment to the Radiation Exposure Compensation Act of 1990 that will include Amchitka Island within its coverage. Finally, I ask that members of the Legislature work diligently to resolve worker compensation claims and litigation relating to Amchitka workers and their families. This Resolution provides a measure of justice that is long overdue to the workers and their families. Thank you for your support.

135 Christensen Drive,
Suite 100
Anchorage, Alaska 99501

Phone 907-222-7714
Fax 907-222-7715
email info@akaction.net
http://www.akaction.net

COVER SHEET

Anchorage Legislative Information Office
Office - (907) 269-0111 Fax - (907) 269-0229

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SJR 21	KEVIN	DOUGHERTY	AK LABORERS	TESTIFY
SJR 21	BEV	ALECK	AKA WORKERS	TESTIFY
SJR 21	PAMELA	MILLER	ACAT	TESTIFY