

From: William L. Fisher (WLF)
To: JEW1
Date: Tuesday, September 29, 1992 6:59 am
Subject: PROJECT CHARIOT ISSUE -Forwarded

Forwarded mail received from: AR1:WN4:WC1:GPY

Good work, Jack! In response to Greg's question, pls call Ernie Ray and let Greg know what you learn. Tx.

CC: LJC1

Files: m0:MESSAGE

9401250162 930514
PDR FOIA
BUSHYHE93-121 PDR

A/IS

Recd 10/27 from Frank Wenzlowski.
Forwarded to J/J, Jack, Joe G.,
etc. 10/28.

Reuters
10-26-92

NEW EVIDENCE OF MILITARY POLLUTION UPSETS NATIVES

By Yereth Rosen

ANCHORAGE, Alaska, Reuter - New evidence of secret military pollution on Alaska's arctic coast has angered Eskimos who say they were used as unwitting guinea pigs in government nuclear experiments.

Residents of the remote Chukchi Sea coast fear the effects of a liquid explosive buried near the village of Point Hope in 1963, a year after radioactive waste was secretly buried nearby.

Dumped near the village's airstrip, the exact amount of the explosive nitromethane is unknown, said Ray Koonuk, mayor of Point Hope, a whaling village some 700 miles northwest of Anchorage.

News of the material -- revealed after villagers learned that the now-defunct Atomic Energy Commission (AEC) in 1962 secretly buried 15,000 pounds of radioactive soil at Cape Thompson, 26 miles south of Point Hope -- raises suspicions of other possible contamination, Koonuk said Monday.

"Who knows what might be out there? I'm pretty sure there's a lot more stuff out there that they've not told us about," he told Reuters. "They can hide it for 30 years. Who know? Maybe they can hide it for another 30 years."

At issue are traces of Project Chariot, an aborted plan by the AEC to blast harbors in arctic Alaska with nuclear bombs. Project workers buried the radioactive soil from Nevada to examine nuclear contamination on the tundra.

Residents learned about the experiment this summer when a University of Alaska researcher discovered documents on it. This month, the researcher found information on the nitromethane dumping.

Cape Thompson is used for caribou hunting, berry picking and other traditional activities.

This month, the Alaska Federation of Natives passed nine resolutions demanding an immediate cleanup and investigations of Project Chariot and other nuclear projects.

Congress has earmarked \$1 million for Project Chariot cleanup, and the U.S. Energy Department has assumed responsibility. But Koonuk said action has been too slow.

"As of right now, we don't see a penny," he said. "If we have to fly down to Washington to get their attention, then we will."

Cape Thompson is just one of many remote Alaska areas where natives are demanding cleanup of Cold War military sites.

Last week, Athabascan Indians in the interior Alaska villages of Fort Yukon, Venetie and Arctic Village demanded that

A/16

the Air Force remove 10 small nuclear generators from a station near Fort Yukon.

(more)

NEW EVIDENCE OF MILITARY POLLUTION UPSETS NATIVES

2-2-2

The generators' existence was revealed last month when a wildfire prompted a notice to the Nuclear Regulatory Commission. The devices provide power for a seismic station that monitors compliance with nuclear test ban treaties, the Air Force said.

Despite assurances that the generators are safe, the villagers said they want the devices replaced, preferably with solar-powered machines.

Past military activities in the remote Aleutian Islands, home to fishing-dependent Aleuts, are also getting increased scrutiny.

U.S. Sen. Frank Murkowski, R-Alaska, has asked the Energy Department to declassify information on 1969 nuclear weapons tests at Amchitka, a western Aleutian island.

And a U.S. Navy base on the Aleutian island of Adak was proposed for listing as a Superfund site last week.

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency said the Adak base is one of the nation's most polluted sites, with hazardous wastes leaking from landfills, drums and pits.

The pollution is threatening fish, marine mammals and sea birds in traditional Aleut food-gathering areas, the EPA said.

- REUTERS -