



## DEPARTMENT OF THE ARMY

HEADQUARTERS, KWAJALEIN MISSILE RANGE  
BOX 26, APO SAN FRANCISCO 96555

BMDSC-RKE-0

12 January 1978

SUBJECT: Minutes of the Kwajalein Atoll Inter-Island Community Relations  
Committee Meeting

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1. Subject meeting was held at 1000 on 6 December 1977. Members present were the following:

Mr. Togo Langrine, Chief Magistrate, Kwajalein Atoll  
Mr. Larry Edwards, DISTAD Representative, Kwajalein Atoll  
Mr. Murph Ownbey, Trust Territory Liaison Officer  
Rev Pijja Matauto, Protestant Missionary, Ebeye  
Mrs. Alice Buck, Community Representative, Kwajalein  
Mrs. Pat Cataldo, Community Representative, Kwajalein ✓  
Mr. Meleran Jelke, Marshallese Workforce Representative  
Mr. Jetan Anjain, Community Representative, Ebeye  
Ms. Maryln Bukida, Womens Club Representative, Ebeye  
Mr. R. E. Haley, KMR Trust Territory Liaison Officer  
COL E. A. Van Netta, CO, KMR (Guest)

2. Mr. Haley called the meeting for the purpose of informing Committee members of impending personnel reductions in the Marshallese work force. He explained that the KMR had suffered a reduction in funds of approximately five million dollars and that KMR contractors will be forced to reduce personnel to operate within this reduced funding. He said personnel cuts would be made on the basis of which jobs can be eliminated with the least impact on the contractor's ability to perform his mission. He assured that required reductions would have nothing to do with an individual's job performance and would not be an adverse reflection on a person's ability. He said that some reduction notices would be issued tomorrow, approximately 18 within the Marshallese work force. He added that a like number, if not more, US personnel would receive notices tomorrow. He estimated that 30 to 50 Marshallese and twice as many US hires would be released within the next two months. Mr. Haley regretted that this action had to be taken during the Christmas season but said this emphasizes the gravity of the financial situation. When there are no funds to continue paying wages, reductions must be made. If this reduction were delayed until after the holidays, it would mean that even more people would have to be released.

3. Mr. Haley emphasized that other cost cutting measures would be taken, such as reducing bus and taxi service, grounds keeping, hours of store operations, etc.

4. Mr. Edwards asked if there was any insurance coverage that would assist released workers. Mr. Haley knew of none. Mr. Ownbey asked what the ratio

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would be between US reductions and Marshallese reductions. Mr. Haley believed that when all reductions were completed the ratio would be two to one, or twice as many US hires would be released than Marshallese. This would make sense in that even with the integrated wage scales, it is less expensive for the contractor to hire Marshallese because Marshallese hires do not require the logistic support provided US hires.

5. Marshallese committee members were skeptical of contractor practices relative to Marshallese job retention. They speculated that in job areas where Marshallese did the same work as US hires, i.e., bus drivers, taxi drivers, etc., US hires would be retained because they were US. Mr. Haley disagreed.

6. Mrs. Buck asked if there was any chance that Marshallese released at Kwajalein could be hired on Ebeye, Jaluit or Majuro. Mr. Edwards said there is a good possibility more people could be placed elsewhere but added that job opportunities are scarce in the TTPI. Mrs. Buck asked why they don't cut out recreation boats rather than reduce people. Mr. Haley said that recreation is funded differently from personnel. Appropriated funds, those cut by Congress, fund jobs. Recreation funds are generated by merchandise markups, and these recreation funds pay for boats, movies, golf club maintenance, etc.

7. Mr. Haley said that COL Van Netta had volunteered to talk to the committee about the impending reductions because of the seriousness of this matter to Marshallese personnel. Committee members welcomed him to the meeting. COL Van Netta said he was anxious to talk to community leaders before the general announcement on job reductions is made. He explained that in addition to personnel, many range operations projects will be suspended and everything is being done to absorb the five million dollar Congressional cut in range funds without having to reduce too many people. He was asked if the personnel cuts would be permanent. He answered they were permanent for this fiscal year and it would depend on Congress as to what would happen next year. He said he expected that all cuts will have been made by the middle of January 1978 with a few exceptions that could extend into February. He told the committee he planned to discuss this entire situation with Ambassador Rosenblatt, Senator Amata Kubua, and DISTAD Oscar DeBrum when they arrive on Kwajalein this week.

9. Mr. Togo Langrine asked that the Army try to protect the Kwajalein Atoll people from loss of jobs. He pointed out that if they lose their jobs they have no place to go, whereas others on Ebeye from Kusai, Likiep, Jaluit, etc., can return to their home island. (This same request was presented to Ambassador Rosenblatt by Iroij Lejolan Kubua during the Ambassador's visit to Ebeye on 11 Dec 77.) It is a matter of prime concern to the people of the Kwajalein Atoll and the Mid-Atoll Corridor.

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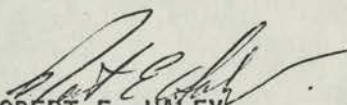
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10. COL Van Netta told Mr. Langrine that every attempt would be made to retain Kwajalein people versus those from other areas. However, he pointed out that it may not be possible to do this in all cases.

11. Mr. Edwards announced that he was starting a fishing co-op on Ebeye. He has a 1000 lb freezer but would need about 15 blocks of ice once a week for the fishing boats. COL Van Netta thought this request could be accommodated.

12. Mr. Haley announced that Marshallese Christmas shopping days on Kwajalein would be 13 - 14 December. He said the Tarlang would be in operation by then to handle the traffic.

13. The meeting adjourned at 1130.

  
ROBERT E. HALEY  
KMR Trust Territory Liaison Officer

DISTRIBUTION: Attendees