

VOICE OF THE PEOPLE

A Tribute to Nuclear Victims and Survivors



Assumption High School
Majuro MH 96960 Marshall Islands

Dedicated to the innocent people...
...who died
...who are suffering and
...whose destiny is shadowed forever...
...because of nuclear bomb tests.

The opinions expressed in this booklet are those of the authors, and do not necessarily reflect the views of Assumption Schools.

Preface

I hope that this is the beginning of creating awareness and thoughtfulness among young generation about their past, present and future. Three years earlier, when I started teaching at Assumption High School, I was little bit puzzled by seeing the carefree attitude of the students. They were not worried about grades, about school rules or just anything... trash in the classrooms but what is the need to care for what's happening around? Why do we bother if no one else is taking care? Then slowly, I came to realize that the students do care and think about everything but they are too shy to express themselves and also hesitate to stop someone from doing wrong. All they needed was a little direction and motivation. Yes, these building blocks of tomorrow have a great potential and it's our responsibility to direct that potential, that energy in correct and positive direction. And I am proud to say that the staff, faculty and administration of Assumption have taken one more step ahead in directing that young potential positively. This year 55 students of junior and senior class of our school have put together their genuine efforts in form of a science fair on nuclear issues to commemorate 51st nuclear victims and survivors remembrance day, and this booklet is an additional supplement to show their creativity and emotions that they are aware of their past, care for their present and are ready for future challenges. And deep in their hearts, they do love their country, their culture and their heritage.

- Latika Raisinghani
March 01st, 2005

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This Pain

Piercing flakes hurt skin
A sorrow little nation
This eternal pain

- Benjua Kaminaga

Atomic Bomb

Atoms spread
Toxic elements
Over the
Marshall
Islands'
Communities

Because
Of
Many U.S.
Bombs

- Nicholas Tibon

T Minus Ten

Ten...nine...eight...
Feel the Marshallese' pain see their unkindly fate
Seven...six...five...
Going at one thousand miles per hour before a deadly dive
Four...
Many Marshallese have gone through heaven's door
Three...two...one...
And all this was caused by just one nuclear bomb
BOOM!!!!!!
Marshallese future is doomed

- Daniel Kyle

The Importance of our Past

The history of our islands is very important and is something we must all be aware of. Take the nuclear tests from 1946 to 1958 on Bikini and Enewetak for example. It's one of the most important eras of our history. What happened in the past must be shown in the present and the future. It's our history. Young people nowadays are forgetting how important our past is to the elders. The elders are aware of what happened between 1946 and 1958; they were there when the bombs exploded. They were living in nearby islands or have heard about the whole incident. Every day of their lives is filled with sadness and agony that they had to leave their homes. They hope each day of their lives to go back to their homeland. Living in another small place that is not their home doesn't suit them.

Young people nowadays lack knowledge of the testing or what had happened after the U.S. tested their nuclear weapons on our islands. When the U.S. dropped the strongest bomb, called Bravo, it exploded, causing millions of corals and other substances to rise up in the air and form tiny particles of radiation fallout. The direction of the wind blew the radioactive fallout to Rongelap. The people who were exposed to high doses of radiation either died at that time of the test or, became severely sick. Others who were exposed to a lesser extent are suffering till date. Most of the Rongelap people have radiation that still continues living in their body. This is long-term effect of radiation. Today, people of Rongelap have claims/money as a fund for the damages that took place in between 1946 to 1958. Even though the U.S. is giving the Rongelapese money, they will never be able to bring back the lives of those who died from radiation. That is what we must all think of. Money cannot buy and bring our radiated land back to its original form, and it cannot stop us from getting sick. We, the young people of today, must be aware of what happened to our past. We must be ready for whatever

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consequences may take place in the next coming years. What if the U.S. stops giving us funds? We must be ready to show them what we think. We need scientists to study the tests, and we need leaders that will lead us to righteousness. Forming programs and spreading what we learn from elders or in school can really make a difference in our country. Everyone counts. Even an individual can make a difference; all it takes is knowing the information of our past.

- Isabella Silk

Victims of a Tragedy

They said it was intended
To promote world peace
But how it ended
Was sad, a lesson to teach
Men of ignorance, of greed
For worldwide recognition
And the people who agreed
But with no cognition
Of what was to happen
To their beloved atolls
And the women and men
The victims of the fall

The weapons went and exploded
One after another.
A story in history mended
A burden upon their fathers
Those who bear the scars of contamination
Who suffered illnesses, mishaps, and exile
In turn were bargained with compensation
Money thought to be worthwhile
They were treated as lab rats
Subjects of experimentations;
Mere beings of the aftermaths
They lost knowledge of their homelands
And their old ways of living
Not knowing where they stand
In a world so perplexing.

- Terrence Muller

A Gift From God, Destroyed

Hermitha John, my interviewee, told me all she knew about the bomb that caused so many diseases and deaths. She wasn't aware of the bomb's destruction, because she thought it would bring peace, but didn't realize that it was too poisonous and powerful for our islands. The Marshallese at that time didn't know how powerful the bomb was; they just let the Americans test the bomb. Now, she feels sorry about those people who left their radioactive islands to live on someone else's island.

King Juda of Bikini let the Americans test the bomb on their island. Hermitha said that she never knew that there were 67 bombs dropped on the Marshalls. She thought there was only one, Bravo. During the time of the testing, she was on Rongelap Atoll. Hermitha said, "I was really scared of what was happening at that time because I thought it was the end of the world. And as I saw a bright light coming from the west, I thought the sun had risen again." When the bomb exploded, she became very frightened because she had never seen or heard anything like it before.

"I'd really like it if my islands were cleaned up so that those who belong there could go back," she said. She recalls that after the explosion, she went to sleep and didn't play with the "snow". When they were taken from Rongelap she said, "The Americans treated us like wild animals. They said we were contaminated, so they were afraid to come close to us."

She then had this last remark to say, "I regret what they did to our islands, because it destroyed our gift from God, our life, water, air, and our islands." She is truly disgusted by what happened.

- Junior Horiuchi

What is Peace?

What is peace?
a world at ease
is what it means
but how can our hearts
be filled with sorrows and pain
how can everything we know
go down the drain
How could a world so peaceful
a land so wonderful
turn into something so awful
our world turned into something unreal
something fake
something that our hearts can't bear to take

Paradise is like a single flower
can be easily destroyed
can be easily devoured
without even our intentions
a beauty like that
can slowly fade away
before our very eyes

It was a fight amongst bigger nations
NO! it was not ours
but yet we got involved
how could it be
now we don't even understand the word "FREE!"

What is peace?
If the word is positive
how can everything so negative happen?

- Lita Martin

Bikini

There was a girl named Bikini. She liked her life in the Pacific Ocean. Bikini enjoyed her time with the islanders and chanting with her friends: the coconut trees, flowers, grass, ocean and her neighbors, Enewetak, Utrik, and Rongelap. One day, when she was playing with her friends, she saw many white men come and try to talk with the islanders. She felt weird, so she followed them. She heard the white men ask the islanders to lend them the island for testing a nuclear bomb. Bikini was sad because the white men wanted to use her as a place for testing.

Time passed by, and more and more white men came.

They started to prepare for the test, and they moved the islanders to her neighbors, the other islands. The test started on March 1st. Bikini was praying and crying. A few minutes later, she felt an explosion and things fall on her body, but she didn't know what they were. After a few seconds, she felt sick, and all her friends had died.

However, she also felt that after a few minutes, she would die too because she was so sick. Before she died, she cried out and she said, "White men, why do you have to kill me? Why do you have to choose me as your testing center?"

Bikini is no longer like before; she died like the friends who lived around her.

- Mei Chen

Bikini Atoll

Bikini Atoll

Once a calm and peaceful land

Now... .. radiation!!

- Alex Lokboj and Abraham MacKneil

Lost Parts

How can we move on
If some of our body parts are not functional?
Compare to the country's part
That has been bombed
These parts are not functional well, either.
They are full of poison
And radiation.
It causes their cells to suffer to
Death.
These cells are not
Perfectly functional as before, they
Are dying.
Nothing can bring
Us our island's back,
Even make us move on. Guess what the
Ri-palle are trying to do, giving the bomb
Atoll's cells millions of green papers;
Because they can't bring
Our country's part back.
It's like a body part that has been damaged and
Cannot be cured because the cells
Are dead. Damage can be healed
But not perfectly cured.
It seems unfair,
Our ancestors had given
Some of our country's parts to the outsiders to
Play with.
I believe they didn't know
What was going on during those days?
Now that we, the young generation have just come to
know
What was happening?
It's too late to bring our atolls and islands back,
Which is painful and disappointing.

- Dahlia Kaneko

Rijojolaar (Abandoned)

Namiko Anjain was in her early twenties when the fifteen-megaton hydrogen bomb, Bravo, was dropped on Bikini Atoll. Not aware of the commotion due to the bomb, she and the rest of the people on Aelon in Ae were surprised when they heard the explosion, which they found amusing. Her brother knew that something was going to happen, but he didn't know exactly what it was. When the bomb exploded, he said that maybe that was probably what the Americans said would happen.

At the time of the explosion, she was in her thatch hut. When she heard the explosion, she and the rest of the people went outside and looked at the bright light emitted from the huge explosion. She said the color was really beautiful, but after looking at it, her eyes began to hurt (burn). The "snow" or fallout of the bomb reached her island, and she said that the kids were eating and playing with it, thinking they were free treats falling from Heaven. As a result, the little kids grew blisters in their mouths, had diarrhea, headaches, and had burns all over their bodies.

After the explosion, a ship with Oscar deBrum on board came to evacuate the people of Aelon in Ae. He told them to leave everything behind. Unfortunately, they had just finished selling their copra and had some money, but they weren't allowed to take that either. They all left their homes with only the clothes on their backs and were taken on high-speed ships to Kwajelein. The elderly people and the women who were pregnant were also taken to Kwajelein, but on airplanes.

When they arrived in Kwajelein, they were all hosed down, as she said, "like pigs in a pig pen." The Americans told them that it was to get rid of the radiation on their bodies. After that, they took their clothes and gave them what seemed to be used clothes. Some of the clothes were too small for the ladies, but they had no other choice.

While in Kwajelein, they were kept inside a fence. This fence was made for the safety and well-being of those who were not infected by the radiation. There were houses inside the fence in which the infected people were kept, and beyond it were guards watching them around the clock, not letting anyone in or out. She said that they would look out from inside the fence and see all the foreigners on Kwajelein. Some of the foreigners would even feel sorry for them and slide bits of food through the fence. She felt as though she and the rest of the people were used as lab rats.

When it was time for them to take a bath, they were taken in buses to the lagoon in only their underwear in the presence of their sons. This type of display is very shameful or humiliating in Marshallese society. And to make matters even worse, they were under very close supervision while bathing. They detested this routine, but they were scared of the Americans and believed that what they were making them do would cure them of the diseases they had developed from the exposure to radiation.

After being held in Kwajelein, the Americans said that it was then safe for them to move back to their islands. Believing the Americans, the islanders went back to their home islands and lived as they did before. But, some time later, they were moved to Ajet, Majuro, because their island still contained a lot of radiation, despite what the Americans confirmed. Ever since then, they have been receiving medical treatment.

Now when Namiko recalls all that she has gone through, she feels hatred towards the Americans for contaminating her islands. She said that even though the Americans are paying them money, nothing will ever replace the loss of their dignity and their once safe islands. Namiko currently lives in Delap, Majuro and she feels like a "rijojolaar" or

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someone who has been abandoned and has lost a valuable piece of her life and desperately wants to go back home.

- Tamera Heine

Deadly Snow

Boom!
Was all she heard from her room
Looking out the window
She was surprised of what was below,
Grabbed a handful of snow
And gave out a blow

Now laying in a bed
Didn't know who was touching her head
She felt very different
They asked her body for a rent
So they'll examine her right under that tent

- Ayako Yamaguchi

Rijojoaar

Namiko Anjain eaar ronoul jima an iio ilo ien eo me kapokpok eo elaajtata ainikien nae etan "BRAVO" eaar eddepoklok ioon Bikini Atoll. Ilo ien in Namiko im armej in Aelon in Ae raar bwilon kon ainikien eo elaaj. Rellakar likit men in emman konke rej kab ron ainikien eo. Leo jein Namiko eaar wor an lemnak ke juon eo men en kar walok nan er ak ear jab lukkun in jela. Ke kapokpok kilelep eo ekar eddepoklok, leo jein Namiko ear ba, " Bwilien men eo in Ri-America ro raar ba enaaj kar walok."

Ilo kar ieen eo kapokpok eo ekar eddepoklok, Namiko ekar bed iloan em aaj eo mon. ke ekar ron ainikien eo , E im aolep armej ro rekar riwoj im reilonok im lale an meram im ebbol lan kon wot men eo ekar eddepoklok. Namiko ej ba wuno in kapokpok eo ekar lap an aibujuij, ak alkin an kar lale, ekar jino n metak im bwil lowaan mejen. Menkwaaraar in kapokpok eo ekar wotlok lal tak nan ioon ane eo. Ajiri ro ie rakar mona ki im bareinwot ikkure kaki. Rej ba wot ke menin letok im rej wotlok tok jen lan. Elak walok ajiri jiddrik ro epok laan loniier, rakar bidodo im eaar bar einwot emmetaktak boraer, im aolepen enbwinnier ear bwil.

Alkin eddepoklok eo, Oscar deBrum ekar jede tok kon juon tima im bok aolep armej ro im ilo Aelon in Ae. Ekar ba nan er im ba ren likit aolep men ko mweier. Ej kab moj aer wia kake waini ko aer im ekar wor jidrik aer jaan ak rejab kar bar maron in bar bok ier. Ejjelok men rekar boke ijjelokin wot nuknuk ko wot rej konaki. Armej rooj rekar iuwe ilo wa rot kan me emmokaj im ilok nan kwajlein. Ritto ro im kora ro wot me ro-bororo wot rekar iuwe ilo wa ko im rej kelok ilo mejatoto nan kwajlein.

Ke rekar tobarlok kwajlein, ri- America ro rekar buttik ier kon ooj ko. Ilo wawain in, relax buttik ier ein er wot piik kan iloan oror kan. Ri-America ro raar kameleik ier in ba ke rej buttik ier konke rej kajjion in jolok baijin ko ilo anbwiniier. Alkin aer kar buttik ier, rekar wutik nuknuk ko

aer im re-America ro rekar ellelok jet aer nuknuk. Nuknuk kein rekar jet nuknuk ko im emoj aer kar jermal. Ewor jet iaan nuknuk ko im rekar drik jen kora rein ak kora rein raar jab keroro konke remijak im ejjelok men eo remaron kar kommane lok nan ri-America ro.

Ke rekar bed ilo kwajlein, rekar bed ilo lowaan juon oror. Oror in ekar komman bwe armej ro im elon baijin epeir ren bed wot laan oror in bwe en bobrae armej ro im rejjab naninmej. Ilowaan oror in ekar wor jet em jiddrik ko. Aolep raan im bon ewor ri lale oror in. Rekar jab kamelim an juon relon im riwoj ilowaan oror in. Namiko ej ba rej kijon erre namojlok im lo an ri-likin ro ilo kwajlein. Jet iaan ri-likin ro rej kijon buromoj kake er im ellelok kijier mona. Rej kadrelon mona ilo oror eo. Namiko ej ba E im relax lemnak, rej ba einwot ke kein kamelmel kan.

Ne ej ieen tutu, rej iuwe ilo wa ko im ilok nan lojet ak rej ekkonak nuknuk jidrik ko wot aer maan mejen laddrik ro nejier. Ilo wawein in ellukun in kajookok ilo mantin Majol. Ak men eo ellukun in nana ke rej lale aer tutu. Rekar rike wawein in ak kon aer mijak ri-America ro bwe rej ba er eo im rej kajakook kinej im baijin ko ippeir.

Alkin aer kar bed ilo kwajlein, ri-America ro rekar ba remaron kio rool nan Aelon ko aer. Rekar lukkan in tomak ri-America ro im rool nan Aelon ko aer im joke einwot mokta. Ak alkin jet iien, rekar emmakit nan Ajjej im Majurokonke aelon ke aer ekar wor wot jet mottan baijin ko ie. Raar lukkan in tomak ri-America ro. Lakkar jen ien eo, relaxkar takto ippen ri-palle ro.

Kio ke emoj an Namiko ioon joreen ko renana , e make elak kio alak likit e make ellukun in akijrate ri- palle ro kon aer kar kakure aelon eo an. Ej ba jekdoon ta ne ri-palle ro rej kolla tok jaan, ak ejjelok men en bo jikin kar jeramman eo aer im kar jo jikiier eo im ekar ejjelok kauatata ie. Raan kein Namiko Anjain ej jokwe ilo Delap, Majuro im ej ba ein e wot rijojoaar im emoj an jerwaane rajitin mour eo an. E

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make ej ba ellukuun in konaan rool nan kapijuknen eo an emool.

- Tamera Heine and Alicia Edwards

The Effect

Snow is coming down
Ten years later people died
It's radiation

- Junior Tibon

What About Us?

We were once happy because we had everything.
But then the U.S. military started their testing.
On March 1st of the atomic era 1954,
We experienced something we never had before.
We encountered pain no human should feel.
Not only pain but also diseases that kill.
The bombs were dropped to ensure the safety of mankind.
But the thought of our safety was nowhere near their
minds.
Our suffering will continue on through our lives,
All because the Americans wanted others to survive.

- Bumiko Ading

Radiation

Racing canoes

Across the open ocean

Doing all traditional things

It was paradise until

Americans came

Took it all away

Innocent as a child, they weren't warned about the
dangers that would

Occur to their islands caused by

Nuclear bombs

- Eun Pyu Lee and Lita Martin

Our Destroyed Lives

I interviewed Sheldon Riklon, and he works at the Department of Energy (DOE). He works there as a doctor, but not only for those who have been affected by the nuclear bomb testing. He also looks at other people who are sick, and especially those who think they might be affected by the radiation that was spread. In his job, he examines people who were affected and visit the clinic every year. He checks their health and screens the patients to see if they're still doing well. Sheldon is one of the doctors who goes with the scientists from the United States to examine the people who were exposed to radiation from the nuclear bomb testing.

Sheldon knows about the nuclear bomb tests in the Marshall Islands and that in between 1946 and 1958 the United States did some studies of bombs here. They tested 67 nuclear bombs here in the Marshalls. The power of the hydrogen bomb 'Bravo' that was tested here was about 1000 times that of the bomb dropped at Hiroshima. It was the biggest bomb and was tested on March 1st, 1954 at Bikini. The four atolls that were affected by this hydrogen bomb testing were Bikini, Enewetak, Rongelap and Utrik. There were sudden effects and late effects that were caused by the fall out of pieces of the atoll that was bombed. Sudden effects included burns on the skins, eye problems, mouth problems, miscarriages, and hair falling off.

Some of the late effects in the Marshall Islands are mainly the changes in the environment. The radioactive fallout has changed soil composition that has contaminated our food crops. The bomb also affected the animals that we eat from the ocean.

At first Sheldon thought of nothing to worry about because it was not important for him at that time. But when he studied more about it and started to understand it, he

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learned and noticed that after the World War II, the Americans had put us under their hands. It made him mad because he believes that Americans took advantage of us and said that they take us as friends. Americans' thought of us as nothing. A few hundred people on an island were nothing for them and they used us. From Sheldon's point of view it could have been hard for the Marshallese to say no to the Americans. Marshallese had a lot of faith and trust in the Americans when they said that it was going to be fine. And now we can't stop radioactivity and cannot live and eat from our own land. Sheldon says that bombing an island is like taking off a piece of our body and not allowing us to use it. We have to keep reminding ourselves about what Americans did and have to keep reminding them because they might try to find a way to stop the funds.

According to Sheldon, the bomb testing has changed the lives of people living here a lot. At first we depended a lot on our cultural foods, like the crops and the seafoods. But after the testing, the United States brought in American foods as a substitute to our cultural foods. It has changed the concepts of family also. Money was not involved earlier but now people try to look for a job that can pay them more to support their families. Money has become the common reason of breaking families. Social status is also being affected. The people were moved from their home islands so that the Americans could test some bombs and, if they had titles in their home islands, then their titles lost their real significance. The main problem is the health problem, which has resulted because of our changed diet, by replacing our cultural food with the American foods. Due to the fallout there are many health problems like thyroid, liver, and breast cancers, miscarriages, eye problems, mouth problems, and many more. The Americans have changed everything in the Marshall Islands, from the environment to the human beings.

Sheldon sees an average number of patients a day going in because of radiation. The number of patients coming

everyday changes because sometimes people go in just because they think they might have radiation or thyroid cancer. There are about 207 patients under the DOE program. What the doctors do to the patients is screen them and check if they have cancer or if they're still doing fine. They also check if they have signals that show that they might have some radiation sicknesses. They take care of primary health care and Sheldon sometimes walks throughout the hospital just to check the patients. He says that according to the American scientists who come here to check the people with radiation, it's normal to have radiation. Some radiation is natural because we get it from our surroundings, but some is serious because it can give you health problems.

I would say that it's true that we all get natural background radiation every day, but we don't know how much we receive in a day? We can get natural radiation from the sun, stars, soil, rocks, and everything else that is surrounding us. It depends on us whether we should hear and believe or not when people say that, in addition to the natural radiation, there is radioactive radiation also in the whole Marshalls and it is not restricted to only four atolls. The nuclear bombs didn't just affect the four atolls but all of the Marshall Islands.

- Samantha deBrum

Radiation

Rolling
Across the open ocean
Dragging along with the wind towards our
Islands
Attached with those
Things that caused many things to be
Irradiated and
Overcastting the sky with
Nuclear wastes.

- Jason Henson

Radiation

Radiation
Affects our lives and it's
Divided us, too
In spite of it's dangers
As we have seen, it
Takes a big part
In
Our lives
Nowadays

- Eun Pyu Lee

Did You Know...

...that radiation is something we can't see, taste, smell, or feel?

...that there are two kinds of radiation: natural radiation and man-made radiation?

...that radiation is necessary for our lives?

...that radiation causes and at the same time can treat cancer?

...that 80% of cancer is caused by carcinogens from cigarette smoke?

...that nuclear power doesn't contribute to the disruption of the ozone layer?

...that nuclear power is much cheaper than fossil fuels?

...that if we start using only nuclear power plants we will need breeder reactors designed to be at least ten times safer than any today?

...that nuclear power plants in the US are extremely controversial and the environmental review process is extensive and expensive?

...that people of Rongelap didn't know there was going to be bomb testing?

...that the people of Rongelap who were not contaminated with radiation were considered as control for the U.S. secret Project 4.1 that involved study of human exposure to radiation?

- Yone Wase

Thoughts of the After Math

It so happened some time ago that I was chatting with a friend of mine. He was a young fellow about my age and a citizen of one of the four atolls. I asked him what he thought about the US after what had happened to his island and people, to which he replied, "I like the green paper they give us!" It was a clear example of how some of the people have become addicted to the compensation promised to them. This other instance I met a miserable drunk who was complaining about his family and the problems he had. He was a Bikinian, and it was awful seeing a young Marshallese waste his life over petty little things. This was an illustration of the problems that most of the young generation faces. Then there is the older generation who are haunted by the legacy of the nuclear testing. Some of them are concerned that they may never be able to return to their home islands, and some bear wounds of contamination. It was clear how the older generation felt about the effects of the nuclear weapons. Finally, there are those who brought about the effects of the nuclear weapons. How do they feel? I've heard a lot of times from Americans that they feel remorse for what had happened, and some even feel ashamed for what their country had done. I had always expected that this was how the U.S. as a whole felt about the effects of the weapons, but my views changed after I heard clear evidence of malevolent remarks from Project 4.1. It was in physics class. Our teacher played videotape that consisted of information about the project. It stated that the nuclear testing was actual experimentations intended to examine the results of significant beta and gamma radiation exposure on human beings and secret medical group was established to monitor and evaluate the Rongelap and Utrik people. The tests proved fatal, and many people suffered from the exposures. What kind of maniac would use humans as lab subjects? Then, hearing Colonel Jingoist (who was interviewed in the video Primetime) say that he didn't care much and was proud of what his country

VOICE OF THE PEOPLE

accomplished added to the astonishment that stirred up my thoughts. It just shocked me to hear such remarks! On the video this guy came out and said that the Marshall Islands should be used as disposal site for U.S. garbage. "Let's solve their problems by polluting their islands even more. A little more waste won't hurt them!" is what he was saying. To make matters even worse, the late president of the RMI was willing to give up some space for U.S. usage for disposal "in turn for more cash." Some would put off these issues by saying, "let bygones be bygones," but I say mistakes of the past should be analyzed and corrected while time still allows it.

- Terrence Muller

Bikini turned into "HELL"

Before was a beautiful island with
beautiful islanders, too.
They had everything on the island
already, such as food &
drinks. They never depended on
imported things,
though they deserved everything
they got.
They were brave & smart people. Back
then, this place was
called "paradise" until, somehow
they agreed to ruin
it by being kind to some maniac
Americans who tested their
bombs. Suddenly, their paradise
turned into "HELL."
People became so weak & everything
on Bikini become
contaminated. They shall no longer
eat & drink from the
trees, lagoons, etc.. Now they regret
what they've
done to both themselves and their own
beautiful island.

- Polynn Nashion

Story of Nuclear Bomb

Ready, people? ten, nine, eight, seven, six, five, four, three, two, one, kaboom! It all started on the day of March 1st, 1954, when the Americans dropped the Hydrogen bomb known as Bravo at the northern part of the Marshall Islands. It was early in the morning when the 15-megaton bomb was dropped. The Americans asked the Bikinians if they could borrow their land to test their bomb, which was much more powerful than the one they dropped at Hiroshima. The Bikinians didn't really know how to speak English, so that they couldn't inform the Americans that they didn't really understand what the Americans were dealing with them about. The Bikinians agreed with what the Americans were saying, but if they had understood more about what the Americans were saying, they wouldn't have let the Americans do what they wanted to do. The Americans evacuated the people of Bikini and were ready to test their 15-megaton hydrogen bomb.

EEEEUuUU, there was the bomb! Oh no! A wind, it looked like the bomb is heading west. Alert! Alert the people of Rongelap and the islands closer to Bikini! But the Americans didn't have the time to warn the people of the islands that were closer to Bikini because they had already dropped their 15-megaton bomb.

BOOM! The bomb exploded near the islands. People were just relaxing, playing, and working, and suddenly a bright light appeared. The people said, "oh my gosh! What a nice color, but where is it coming from?" They kept staring at it and after staring at it, their eyes began to hurt. They wondered why because they didn't know that it was the light of something dangerous. The fallout of the bomb was spreading around the islands and the people thought it was some kind of snow or food falling from heaven, especially the children. They were playing, the fallout reached them, and they thought of food and snow and started tasting them and playing with them. Guess what happened later.

A Tribute to Nuclear Victims and Survivors

Severe vomiting, diarrhea, blisters, headache, sore tongues, and much other kind of sicknesses appeared. It was sad because they were happy on their island, but something appeared suddenly to them, a thing that they didn't expect. A ship came later and took them to the island of Kwajelein. When they reached Kwajelein, Americans put the people who got radiated in cages and treated them like pigs. They hosed them and took their clothes off and gave them little pieces of cloth to put on. The Americans were treating them like that, but what if the Marshallese treated Americans like that? What would they say? That's another question. It would have been sad if you as a Marshallese saw what the Americans were doing to your grandparents or relatives. So, before giving away your islands, think twice about that land. You'll use it forever, but money cannot stay with you forever.

- Keolani Loek

Bravo : Bad And Sad

The Bravo shot in Bikini Atoll
affect us both children and adult
many of the things that happened were bad
which made the people sad
we were searching for direction
but still we did need protection
we were in danger
including some strangers
we opened our eyes
and whispered why
we were planning to stay
when we had to move away
after we made our compromise
we started to realize
that the Bravo did not bring peace
but caused damages that would never appease
we made a choice
that we would never rejoice
by giving our islands
to the Americans
to be used for testing
which we did not find interesting
our hearts burn like fire
for something we did not desire
we were in deep sorrow
didn't know what would happen to us tomorrow
we were hoping to die
and to say goodbye

- Christina Capelle

Story of Rongelap Atoll

On a small isolated or not-so-isolated atoll in the Marshall Islands called Rongelap, a small boy woke up early that morning and did all his chores. After he finished he went out to play with his friends. Suddenly, BOOM!!! They heard a thunderous noise. As they looked up into the sky, it was very bright, and a mushroom cloud had formed in the sky. Later, pieces of crippled coral reefs, sand, and coconut trees were falling from the sky. Along with these falling pieces of objects came radiation. The boy, looked with amazement, said, "ta le ta e." His friend answered, "mejen ke snow." They played with the "snow" and some even opened their mouths wide to eat it. Several days later the people of Rongelap began to feel ill; some died, others had skin cancer, thyroid, and their hair start to fallout. After that, some white man came and observed the radiated people. They tried curing and helping the islanders, and giving the islanders a large amount of money. However, until now the islanders were still angry, suffered, and they still think that money given is not enough to cover for all the damages caused by the white men.

- Kazutoyo Wase

Our Island Now

Once upon a time, we used to be so happy we jump
Now, we are sick and all we have is a dump,
Even our land is one of the slumps
All because of the nuclear bombs.

- Alex Lokboj and Abraham MacKneil

Bravo

Once upon a time, there was a boy named Bravo who lived in the United States. Bravo grew up and was treated badly by the Americans. The Americans assigned him to destroy the most beautiful island, Bikini, in the Marshall Islands on March 1st, 1954. So, on that day he was brought there and dropped by the Americans. Bravo was screaming "NOOOOOOOO," by that time. He was crying and praying to God to forgive him for what he had done. After Bravo exploded, all of Bravo's remains or ashes, called "radioactive fallout," landed or was sprinkled over the islands of Bikini, Ronglap, Rongrik, Ailingnae, and Utrik. All the islands were affected by Bravo's fallout, and were radioactive.

At first, the islanders thought that the fallout was snow, so they started playing with it and eating it. Bravo was still alive; however, he was looking as an angel and was watching the islanders suffer because all the islanders were affected by the radiation. He was mad at the Americans, so one night he appeared to all the Americans and told them to help the Marshallese by providing them with medical treatment and giving them what they needed and wanted. The Americans did what Bravo told them to do, and they gave the Marshall Islands 150 million dollars. It wasn't enough, but Bravo thought that it was better than nothing. Bravo still remembered what happened that day, and he feels guilty, but he still prays for the Marshallese people and their islands.

- Kimberly Tani

Our Land

Before the testing
Everything was in order
Now our home is gone

- Junior Tibon

Bravo & Sorrow

Bravo makes me sad
but drives Bikinians mad
it caused a lot of sorrow
when the Americans had to borrow
and promised to pay back tomorrow
Bikini, a once beautiful land ...
To have Bikini back
would be my solemn demand

- Cradle Alfred

Community's "Nuclear Testing Program" Insights

The Nuclear Testing Program in the Marshall Islands has affected islanders and non-islanders of the islands where Nuclear Testing occurred. Our insights from the interviews around the community were dramatic, although some of the people that we interviewed weren't present at the actual period of the testing. Most of them were as concerned about the adequacy of funds for the destructed islands as they were about the radioactivity still present on the tested islands. Nothing will ever be the same on the islands since Bravo and its relatives roared and brightened the sky above the Marshall Islands.

Terror occupied the islands of the Marshall Islands as each bomb took pieces of islands bits by bits. Americans told to the islanders of Bikini that the bombs would do no harm to them. Bikinians didn't know that these bombs were about to dramatically change their lives and others'. Now that the United States has cratered and made the islands impossible to live and survive on, they are paying back incredibly large amounts of money. Though it seems a reasonable price, islanders still refuse that it would be enough for the islands and their people.

"The United States tried to maintain a low profile of what was really going to happen if the Bravo was going to be tested," said one of our clients. The United States did mention why they were testing the bombs and why these islands were appropriate to test them on, but they didn't mention what the explosions would do to the people and the islands. "It is sad how so many people suffered from radiation illnesses, but the fund is still not enough to cover for the extreme outcomes."

Some persons interviewed thought that the testing had positively affected their history, development, and education. The Marshallese now have a major event that occurred on their islands that could be educational for

A Tribute to Nuclear Victims and Survivors

them. Years after testing took place, the United States is still giving great help to the Marshallese and their islands. They've helped by increasing educational programs, building hospitals, and in many other ways that Marshallese do not even recognize. Children, generation after generation, will now be in good arms since the United States has helped maintain a safe environment on the Marshall Islands.

Although the money seems not enough for some of us, we should also be thankful that we have an army ready to protect us. The United States, Marshallese, and the world have seen what a nuclear bomb is capable of doing and that there is not any need to test more. The Nuclear Testing Program had taken and ruined many lives, it also had and will continue to save more.

The questions that we asked and the responses we received are as follows:

Question: What was your experience during the time of the actual tests that occurred on Bikini? What happened during that time?

Glenn Lewis: I didn't really feel anything, but I heard a strong and powerful sound and saw a bright light that made me thought that it was the end of my life and the world.

Hermita John: On the day of the Bravo test, I didn't really feel anything but I heard an enormous explosion and the snow-like ashes that made the people sick. We thought it was the end of the world because of the bright light striking across the sky.

Kathleen Tani :During the time of the bravo test, which was the loudest and biggest explosion of all the others, I thought it was really scary and that it would've reached the other islands and destroy them as well.

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Question: What did the nuclear testing program do to you?

Glenn Lewis: The nuclear testing program changed our lives. New types of diseases and sicknesses occurred since the many tests took place.

Hermita John: The nuclear testing program has changed many people's life by making them see others differently when they had been radiated, although they were from the same culture and kind.

Kathleen Tani: It has changed the victims and survivors lives.

Question: What are your thoughts about the fund from the United States?

Glenn Lewis: I think the funds the Americans are giving us aren't enough because money cannot bring back our early natural lives. I didn't like and wasn't used to the islands that the Americans referred us to, and I want to go back to my home island where I belong. The money does help but it isn't covering up all our needs.

Hermita John: Seeing the minute amount of money they are offering us, my thoughts about the fund from the United States are that they are less concerned. Although, it has helped tremendously, aside from all the doctors, with our medical needs.

Kathleen Tani: The fund doesn't do any much beside payments to medical programs, and has changed the victims and survivors lives.

Question: What are your thoughts about your island and its environment?

Glenn Lewis: I want to go back to my home island to be free and do what ever I want to do.

A Tribute to Nuclear Victims and Survivors

Hermita John: I want to go back to my home island and be as free as I can be.

Kathleen Tani: The islands have been terrifyingly ruined with the radiation and their people didn't have any choice but to not to live there even though they didn't want to go anywhere else.

Question: What are outcomes for you since the tests?

Glenn Lewis: Not everything is good for me now since the nuclear bombs destroyed my island and myself.

Hermita John: Everything seems impossible to become better for the islanders of the tested islands.

Kathleen Tani: Lives have been changed totally.

Question: If you had a chance in making the decision about the tests, what would you have said?

Glenn Lewis: I would've said no, but at that time I didn't know how to speak English, and if I knew how to I would've have rejected the bombs to be tested on our islands because of all the damages it has caused.

Hermita John: If I had a chance, my answer to allow the tests would have been different than the given words that allowed the bomb tests because of so many different destructions the nuclear tests had done to the people and the islands.

Kathleen Tani: I would've said no, because of what it had done to the people of the Marshall Islands.

Question: How well were you informed about hydrogen and atomic bombs?

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Glenn Lewis: I only know what is a bomb, but do not know what a hydrogen bomb or an atomic bomb is and what they can do?

Hermita John: I know only about bombs, but don't have any idea about hydrogen or an atomic bomb.

Kathleen Tani: Our generation was not well informed. I think the Nuclear Victim Program of your school is good because it teaches the young generation about the history of our nation and the science aspects of the testing.

- Andrew Mejbon, Keolani Loeak, Kimberly Tani and
Kenneth Jorkan

We Are Not Stupid

There was once an atoll called Bikini
But now it is deadly Bikini
People were living a good life in Bikini
Americans tested nuclear bombs in Bikini
Americans probably thought the Bikinians were crazy
Americans should be ashamed of themselves
Once Bikinians rise, they will make Americans pay

- Tricia Menke

Home Sweet Home

Some people called it Bravo Shot,
You may call it the Atomic Bomb,
But I call it
DA BOMB
It was felt on the isolated islands,
Which rebels called ground zero, but we called
HOME SWEET HOME.

Due to the bomb, Home Sweet Home has gone by,
Leaving the white ashes, which
We thought were snow,
Guess what? It was a poisonous chemical that
Caused radiation and affects
People's health and
Home Sweet Home's beauty and nature.

Generations and generations have gone by,
Home Sweet Home will never exist again.
Tears rolling down our eyes,
Pain and sorrow in our hearts,
We are still looking for peace
Because we are survivors
And forgivers.

- Dahlia Kaneko

Marshallese Remembrance Poem

We Marshallese feel:

Filled with
Radiation the
U.S. had
Sprinkled upon us
That hurts us
Rather than being stabbed
Atoll beauty is MURDERED
The day the BRAVO
Exploded
Devastation began.

We also feel angry and sorry at our first leaders
Who gave these beautiful islands
To the U.S. to test their bombs in
Order to do some research or experiments
On humans.

- Wilbert Alik

Mourning Hearts

Their bodies received radiation,
They were one of God's beautiful creations.
They were rich being traditional,
Not knowing what was coming,
They were forced to migrate leaving all their belongings
And were ruined by the nuclear bombings.
They thought it was nothing,
They thought it was snowing,
They started playing.
Bodies hurting, hearts were mourning,
Life became a tragedy.
It was never experienced on their pristine islands.

- Alicia Reimers

Bikini

The Island of Bikini
The island of Bikini,
The island of beauty,
The island that we need,
The island of memory,
The island that we keep,
The island that a bomb fall in deep,
The island that U.S. cheat,
The island that U.S. feed,
The island that never retrieve,
The island where people never feel relieved.

- Che Wei

Why are we Nuclear Victims?

Marshallese people feel sorry and frustrated at what the Americans have done to them and their home islands. They're concerned that the radiation creates diseases and cancers that make their bodies not function normally. Also, the plants and marine resources that they eat are also contaminated. It was not only the Americans' fault, but it was also ours. We should feel guilty because of our wrong choice to allow some educated people to test their powerful bombs here in the Marshalls. We should know that millions of green papers or money can't cure or even treat our suffering to death. We never inherited infections or cancers before the bomb, but now we do. Why? The Americans knew that it was too dangerous to test the nuclear bombs in their own places and it would be harmful for the people living nearby. Why then, did they ignore such things while conducting testing here? "Why did nuclear testing take place here in the Marshall Islands?"

- Wilbert Alik

Nuclear

Nuclear weapons were
Unclear to us and we didn't know the
Causes or effects that would
Later harm us
Evidently, we
Are now wiser and have the power to choose our actions
Responsibly

- Daniel Kyle

Asking Why?

Asking God why,
How come our children die?
Die from the ash of snow white,
How come Uncle Sam lie?
Saying radiation wouldn't stay by our side,
But it truly hurts from the inside,
Please don't try to deny,
It is the fact, that our people cry,
The tear in their eyes were hardly dry,
For losing their homeland and their pride,

Asking Americans why,
How come they keep on trying?
Let those aircraft fly,
Test those deadly weapons that dropped by,
Bomb drop from the sky,
Exploded and caused the high tide,
For those we got to stand and fight,
For our islands and rights.

- Che Wei

Beautiful Bikini?

This was Bikini
Beautiful and colorful Bikini
Beautiful beautiful Bikini
This was Bikini

- Tricia Menke

Our Home

Islands of beauty
Islands of deadly nature
Home of our people

- Benjua Kaminaga

My Wish

If I got a chance,
I would stop the nuclear test.
I would make the island for defense,
Change the islanders' sense,
Make them think twice,
Make their minds wise,
It will stop the pain that happened since,
The pain that's unable to be fixed,
The pains that others tease,
That is why I'm writing this...

- Che Wei

Was it really for the "Good of Mankind?"

Early in the morning of March 1, 1954, a hydrogen bomb, the biggest of all bombs tested, also known as Bravo, was ignited on the surface of the reef of Bikini Atoll. What was thought to be for the "Good of Mankind" was actually the worse that was unexpected. An intense fireball strucked what was once a beautiful inhabited atoll. The heat measured into innumerable counts of degrees with a rate of 300 miles per hour. The blast stripped the branches and coconuts from the trees and ripped away the sand, coral, and reef life of Bikini and fluttered them up into the air. In the meantime, per say, three hours later, snow-like ashes fell from the sky onto Rongelap, which was 125 miles east of Bikini. Bravo was such an intense bomb that even the hundreds of miles couldn't go up against the presence of its explosion. Not understanding what the snow-like ashes were, children from Rongelap played in the thick layer of ashes that covered the atoll two inches from the surface. Later that night adults and children exchanged confused and horrified faces to each other as the physical effects of the fall-out began to take place among the people, especially the children. The people started to panic as they each experienced vomiting, diarrhea, ghastly scars on their skins, the bleeding of their gums, sores, and their hair falling out.

Now was that really for The Good of Mankind? If it was for a good cause why did these people have to suffer? We commemorate a marking in history, 51 years later for we will never forget what happened in the past.

- Savannah Hanerg, Cyrus Padre, Dorianne Kabua and
Elizabeth Samuel

Two Tales of One Unforgettable Moment

Namiko Anjain's Story...

A woman aged in her seventies now, was very reluctant to tell me the story of what happened three hours after Bravo was detonated on Bikini Atoll.

Namiko Anjain was in her early twenties when incident took place in 1954. She had been on Alingae, which is south of Rongelap, collecting coconuts. She and a couple of other ladies that were with her, saw the light that blasted. Namiko stated, "I heard from my older brother that something will happen, but we didn't know when?" It was then she realized that this was it. She and the others that accompanied her saw the snow-like ashes that fell from the sky three hours later and they were shocked with amazement and confusion. Later that day they returned to Rongelap and experienced severe vomiting and effects that resulted from the fall-out. "I was scared and confused," Namiko says. "It was all sudden and unfair that we didn't know about it."

Three days later when the Americans came to Rongelap, the people were told to leave all their belongings and were taken to Kwajelein.

We were hosed down with water and remained in our one pair of wet clothes. "It was devastating. We stayed there to be tested again and again. We were tired and wanted nothing more but to return to our atoll," says Namiko.

Namiko comments that much radiation is present on Jokdrik, a small atoll off the coast of Rongelap. Also that you could tell when an island or atoll is full of radiation because when the coconut trees grow, they split in half down the middle. It's shocking to see the outcomes of the bomb.

In the present year 2005, Namiko suffers from thyroid cancer, weekly visits to the hospital, while keeping track of seven different types of medication pills that she takes daily. "Life is tough now and I greatly wish that none of the testing took place. But God will look over us, he always does no matter what," she says and sighs.

Helen Boaz's Story...

I was pregnant with my fifth child in the year 1954. I too saw the light of the blast. At that time, I was on Rongelap. It was a typical day of weaving baskets and doing chores that lead to moaning and groaning. Others who were pregnant gave birth later down the months to what didn't seem human at all. They came out as jelly and grape like looking figures. Several women suffered from miscarriages. Luckily for me, I gave birth to a healthy girl, who also has given birth to healthy children. It was either the fact I was blessed or I may have treated my body rightly. I was taken to Kwajalein along with other people, hosed down with water, and tested. I suffered thyroid cancer, vast amounts of hair loss, consecutive hospital visits and pills.

Over the years we have heard of the story of the Nuclear Testing that occurred over and over again. I conclude that this was a total waste of our time and effort into making our islands like paradise. If I had a strong voice to stand up and propose, I'd say that the Americans are unfair and that they should give us back our land other than all these millions of dollars that cannot repay for their debt.

Financially, yes, but emotionally, no. I've lost a lot of family members and close friends.

All having to do with the radioactivity and chemicals that I still don't understand. Youngster now days are very fortunate to learn of such science and high technology. Maybe some day they too will learn how to create massive

bombs for peaceful purposes and not to test because they will know about the causes and effects.

- Savannah Hanerg, Cyrus Padre, Dorianne Kabua and Elizabeth Samuel

A Young Adult Speaks for Her Island

An Assumption school student herself agreed to answer the questions that she was asked. From this she says: Well, basically, Bravo was detonated on Bikini, not Enewetak. But because of the trade winds, my atoll was affected too. As a present victim, I'm glad that I wasn't born back then, but then again, if I existed, I have no idea where I'd be. I also express great concern to the Nuclear Victims and Survivors. In addition, I also agree that no amount of money could pay the debt of those who suffered greatly from the Bravo Testing. I'd rather die naturally than because of a radiation sickness. If I had a voice, I'd say that the Americans were wrong. They shouldn't have tested in our islands. It isn't right to treat other human beings like laboratory test-animals. They knew for a fact what effects the bomb will cause. Again, it's not right, it's not fair, and it should be re-looked over and over again.

- Savannah Hanerg, Cyrus Padre, Dorianne Kabua and Elizabeth Samuel

We Express Our Gratitude and Devotion

The victims and survivors of March 1, 1954 will never be forgotten in our thoughts, hearts, and prayers. We will endure and share their losses and gains for years to come. For generations to future generations.

Our encounter with reality and research of the incident has broaden us not just mentally but emotionally. We could now easily grasp to the lives of those affected. We all feel remorse for what had happened.

Despite all the pain and loss, we all wish all the best to the victims and survivors of the Nuclear Testing. Tribute to you.

- All AHS Juniors and Seniors

**If you have any question or need
more information, please contact or send
your suggestions and comments to:**

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or

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