

THE PERMANENT REPRESENTATION OF DENMARK
to the European Union
Brussels

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PAR PORTEUR

Enclosure

File
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Department

14 January, 2005

Your Excellency,

My government has asked me to reply to your letter of 14 December 2004 concerning the consideration by the European Parliament of the case of the workers at the military base in Thule, Greenland who contributed to cleaning up after a United States bomber crashed in Greenland in 1968.

For your information, the Government of Denmark has consistently agreed with the European Commission in its legal assessment of this matter, according to which the Euratom Treaty and the Euratom Directive 96/29 do not apply to this case.

As you know, the Government of Denmark sent extensive factual material to the European Parliament as early as the end of 2003 concerning the health-related aspects of the accident.

The United States authorities declassified and released 317 documents related to the crash in January 1995 in response to a request by the Association of Irradiated Thule Workers. Nevertheless, the United States authorities did not release some classified documents. Based on this, in 1995 the Government of Denmark asked the United States authorities several supplementary questions.

In September 1995, the Government of Denmark received replies to these questions. The replies indicated that the documents not released did not contain information that could contribute to shedding additional light on the health-related aspects of this case. Finally, the replies indicated that the United States considers this case closed.

Several health investigations of the Thule workers were performed from the mid-1980s until 1995. The investigations carried out so far have not been able to demonstrate that the Thule workers have suffered adverse health effects as a result of exposure to radiation or to other hazardous substances. At this time, 10 years after the latest epidemiological study of mortality and the prevalence of cancer, the Ministry of the Interior and Health has asked the National Institute of Public Health to carry out a follow-up registry-based investigation of these Thule workers. The National Institute of Public Health will conduct this registry-based investigation in cooperation with the Danish Cancer Society during 2005, and the results will naturally be fully available to the public.

Other than this, the Government of Denmark has no plans to reopen this case, which closed in 1995.

In conclusion: regardless of the non-applicability of Euratom provisions to this case in response to the substance matters raised in your letter Denmark has continuously been "taking appropriate action where this is necessary to safeguard the health of the persons concerned" as so phrased in your communication of 14 December 2004.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read 'Claus Grube', is written over a horizontal line.

Claus Grube
Ambassador, Permanent Representative