



UNIVERSITY OF FLORIDA
GAINESVILLE, FL 32611

DEPARTMENT OF ZOOLOGY
223 BARTRAM HALL
904/392-1107

January 21, 1986

Mr. George Balazs
National Marine Fisheries Services
P.O. Box 3830
Honolulu, HI 96812

Dear George:

I thought I had pondered every possible twist of the subsistence plea in my time, but your Tokelau fish hook reaches a peak beyond my imagining. It's really the epitome of the dilemma of how to deal wisely and humanely with such claims. At first thought this one made me shed all hard-nosed tendencies and say what the hell, the hooks are so ethnic and aesthetic why not just let the people have the confiscated shell? It's only gathering dust in the NMFS attic.

But then I thought about the case of the Japanese carey-carving guild and how traditional and artistic it is, and what a source of pride to the nation, and how in spite of all that we're trying to deprive the guild of shell to carve.

But then I backed up again, and began thinking how there probably never was a tuna able to tell plastic from carey, so why not send out a few gross of plastic hooks with the same pattern and breaking strength as carey, and get the people to try them alongside traditional hooks trolled from the other side of the same traditional aluminum outboard-powered boats--of the kind I observe are in use out there. How about that, George? Anyway you scratched up a real tricky one this time, and thanks for letting me share your perplexity over it.

Best regards.

Sincerely yours,


Archie Carr
Graduate Research Professor