

U.S., Japan Today Begin Radiation Parley Here

Discussions will be held on various problems of radioactivity, including standardization of measurements and methods of decontamination, at a five-day Japan-U.S. conference on radiobiology to open in Tokyo today.

The conference at the Japan Council of Science Building in Ueno will be attended by a team of seven American experts specially sent to Japan by the U.S. Government and 15 Japanese counterparts.

Among the American scholars will be Dr. Paul B. Pearson, chief of the biological division, biological and medical section of the U.S. Government Atomic Energy Commission. The Japanese scientists will include Prof. Kenjiro Kimura, dean of the Tokyo University science department.

The first-day session will be devoted to studies of the maximum safety limit of radioactivity, the most important practical question facing the Japanese people since the start of the American thermonuclear experiments in the Marshall islands in March.

As for the tolerable limit of radioactivity in terms of drinking water, the American National Bureau of Standards (NBS) has set 22 counts a liter when radioactive elements are unidentified and 176 counts a liter in the case of strontium 90 only.

But a similar standard offered by the Atomic Energy Commission (AEC) showed an uncomparably wide variance from the NBS standard. AEC reportedly set the limit in case elements are unknown at about 1,000,000 counts a liter, provided monitoring is made within three days after a thermonuclear explosion.

Details about these NBS and AEC figures will be reported in the conference.

A simple method of analyzing elements or counting the length of days after a thermonuclear experiment is also being sought.

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