

BIKINI AND ENiwETOK SURVEYS

The contamination with fission products, as the result of the atomic bomb detonations, over, under or near the water at Bikini and Eniwetok atolls, has created very complicated problems of evaluation. Each of the five detonations in these areas pose separate problems, but studies of all five bursts contribute to a better understanding of the problem.

The waters about Bikini contain only trace quantities of radiation. The great mass of sludge over the target center (approximately 500,000 tons) remains moderately active. From the target area the radiation spreads to the biotic forms about the atoll where it is absorbed and retained. Some migration of radiation has taken place up onto the islands where it is picked up by the plants. Such translocated fission products onto the land are of a low order of intensity, about three to four times the natural background.

The shot islands at Eniwetok, and the plants and animals on the shot islands contain radioactive fission products. Some modification of the plants is observable. The plants and animals in the lagoon adjacent to the shot islands have absorbed radioactive products. Distribution of the active wastes about the Eniwetok Lagoon is not uniform as in the case at Bikini but concentrated adjacent to the shot islands.

The effect of mixed fission product contamination of biotic systems is being continued both in the test areas and in the laboratories in this country.

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