



  
 BROOKHAVEN NATIONAL LABORATORY  
 ASSOCIATED UNIVERSITIES, INC.

Upton, Long Island, New York 11973

(516) 282-7538  
FTS 6667

Medical Department

December 28, 1981

Julian Van Lancker, M.D.  
 Professor of Pathology  
 Chairman, Pathology Department  
 School of Medicine  
 University of California  
 Los Angeles, California 90024

REPOSITORY Brookhaven Nat. LAB  
 COLLECTION MEDICAL DEPT RECORDS  
 BOX No. NA / E.P. Cronkite Files  
 FOLDER "Paglia, Donald, E."

Dear Dr. Van Lancker,

You know of the participation of Dr. Donald E. Paglia of your department in the continuing medical studies on the Marshallese that were exposed to fallout March 1, 1954. The primary lesion of major importance to mankind has been the development of a wide spectrum of thyroid tumors. Over the years many different distinguish thyroid pathologists have served as the pathology diagnosticians. Unfortunately, no one of the pathologists or any collective group had ever studied all of the material. It became obvious three years ago that there were some discrepancies in diagnosis that were bothersome from the scientific standpoint and truly troublesome from the standpoint of the litigation that is now being initiated. It was fortunate that Dr. Paglia had been a long term participant in the Marshallese studies. Dr. Paglia analyzed the situation and made a reasonable proposal for convening a board of pathologists to review together all of the material. This was initially vehemently opposed by some of the previous pathological consultants as being absolutely unnecessary.

I was convinced by the logic of Dr. Paglia's arguments and invited all of the participants in the past, such as, Drs. Ackerman, Meissner, Reed, Woolner and Vickery. In addition, Brown Dobyns the thyroid surgeon was also invited. Dr. Paglia and Dr. Dobyns organized the slides and blocks and the entire group studied the material for two days and much to my surprise came into near total agreement on the diagnoses of the tumors resolving the scientific issues and providing a much sounder base for defense at the time of litigation. I and all of the officials in the Department of Energy who were concerned with the Marshallese consider this a major triumph involving classical histopathology. It would not have happened spontaneously and it was only because of the reasonable approach of Dr. Paglia that it was possible to get the participants together and in concert bring them into near 100% agreement.

Page 1 of 2

Julian Van Lancker, M.D.

-2-

December 28, 1981

I thought you would like to know of the contribution that a member of your staff made to this problem that is so important to mankind and the future development of nuclear energy.

Sincerely yours,

Eugene P. Cronkite, M.D.  
Medical Research Center  
BROOKHAVEN NATIONAL LABORATORY  
Upton, New York 11973

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