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CURRENT MEDICAL STATUS OF MARSHALLESE

Dr. Robert Conard of the Medical Department of Brookhaven National Laboratory, on returning from his annual medical examination of the Marshallese exposed to fallout following the March 1, 1954, test at Bikini, has reported the data summarized in the enclosed table. Retrospective estimates of the internal dose to the thyroids from absorbed radioiodines add 600 to 1400 rems to the 175 rad external dose. Analogous internal doses for the fourteen Marshallese (six children and eight adults) who happened to be on nearby Ailinginae Atoll at the time of fallout are not available.

Dysfunction of the thyroid gland continues to appear in these people at rates far greater than would appear by chance. Dr. Conard will provide continued medical surveillance of the Marshallese with the concurrence of the newly appointed High Commissioner, the Honorable Edward E. Johnston, and the assistance of the staff of the Trust Territory and Brookhaven National Laboratory.

As indicated in the enclosed table, it is planned that three children and one adult (plus an interpreter) will go to Brookhaven for evaluation and possible surgery, probably in August. A public announcement concerning the status of the Marshallese may be prepared by Brookhaven at that time.

John R. Totter, Director
Division of Biology and Medicine

Enclosure:
Data on Medical Survey

Secretariat (2)
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8c/s

DOE ARCHIVES

I. Young Rongelapese exposed to fallout (175 rads external dose plus 600 to 1400 rem internal), March 1, 1954, when they were:

1 to 8 years of age - Total - 19

- | | |
|--|----------|
| 1. Currently normal by clinical and biochemical tests. | 2 (11%) |
| 2. Currently hypothyroid with minimal nodularity. Responding satisfactorily to oral thyroid hormone therapy. | 3 (16%) |
| 3. Have undergone surgery because of nodular thyroids; histologic diagnoses of adenomatous goiter and Hürthle cell tumor. Responding satisfactorily to oral thyroid hormone therapy. | 11 (58%) |
| 4. Recent development of nodules in the thyroid; will go to Brookhaven for evaluation and possible surgery. | 3 (16%) |

(None of six Ailinginae children exposed to external dose of 70 rad have shown thyroid dysfunction.)

II. Surviving adult Rongelapese exposed to fallout:

Total - 34

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1. Papillary carcinoma removed surgically at age 41. No recurrence. Taking oral thyroid hormone therapy. | 1 |
| 2. Small nodule at age 40 which disappeared under oral thyroid hormone therapy. | 1 |
| 3. Rough mass in one lobe at age 36; will go to Brookhaven for evaluation and possible surgery. | 1 |

III. Surviving adult Ailinginae people exposed to fallout (70 rads external dose):

Total - 8

- | | |
|--|---|
| 1. Adenomatous goiter removed at age 45. Recovered and on thyroid therapy but died of influenza in 1968. | 1 |
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