

January 17, 1967

MEMORANDUM FOR CHAIRMAN SEABORG
 COMMISSIONER JOHNSON
 COMMISSIONER NABRIT
 COMMISSIONER RAMEY
 COMMISSIONER TAPE

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THROUGH GENERAL MANAGER ^{S/} *Ernie DeKeris*

SUBJECT: RECENT INFORMATION ON THE STATUS OF THYROID DISEASE IN THE
 MARSHALLESE EXPOSED TO FALLOUT FROM THE BIKINI TEST OF
 MARCH 1, 1954

The following updates the information on this subject with respect
 to our last memorandum dated May 4, 1966 (copy attached).

The five cases mentioned on page 2, paragraph 2, were brought from
 Rongelap to Brookhaven during the latter half of May and admitted to
 the Medical Department on May 26, 1966. After thorough evaluation
 they were transferred to the New England Deaconess Hospital, Boston,
 for subtotal thyroidectomies. Following operation, they were returned
 to Brookhaven on June 11, discharged from Brookhaven on June 16, and
 returned home.

All withstood surgery easily and have exhibited no complications
 except the expected hypothyroidic state which is to be treated by
 daily oral administration of appropriate thyroid hormone. All the
 patients were females with present ages of 46, 20, 15, 13, and 13,
 or respective ages of 34, 8, 3, 1, and 1 years at time of exposure.
 All showed adenomatous goiters with nodules varying from one large
 single nodule to multiple small ones; one patient had a small nodule
 with Hürtle cells which, while anaplastic, are not necessarily
 neoplastic.

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May 4, 1966

Fifty-five of the 69 were on Rongelap Island and received estimated whole body doses of 175 R plus possible doses of 700 to 1400 rem to their thyroids from the radioiodines. The remaining 14 (six were 1-10 years of age) were visiting on Ailingnae, a nearby island, and received estimated doses of 69 R whole body exposure, plus less certain but probably small thyroid doses. None of the six children who were on Ailingnae have thus far developed nodules, so that the incidence of nodules among the 19 more heavily exposed on Rongelap when 1-10 years old is 13/19, or 68 percent. Two of the three adults were on Rongelap and one was on Ailingnae.

Thus far only six of the above, including the adult found to have cancer, have been subjected to surgery. The current plans are to bring five of the remaining 10 cases to Brookhaven for further diagnostic study and possible surgery during May 1966. One is a 46-year-old adult woman and the others are girls presently 15, 13, 13, and 20 years old. They will be accompanied by the Rongelap schoolteacher who will act as interpreter. The travel and treatment of these people has been developed with the cooperation of the Honorable Wilfred Goding, High Commissioner, Trust Territory of the Pacific Islands.

All these Marshallese presumably have been taking tetraiodothyroacine, a synthetic thyroid hormone, for the last seven months. The intent of the therapy is to prevent and/or cause regression of the nodules. Some success has been seen, but it is too soon to draw conclusions.

Forty children who were on Utrik at the time and received estimated doses of 14 R plus proportionately smaller internal thyroid doses were examined for nodular thyroids; none were found.

Among 194 unexposed controls who are now living on these islands, three cases of thyroid nodules were found, all in adults more than 47 years. Other forms of thyroid disease were not seen.

You will be kept informed of the progress of these studies; the next noteworthy item will be the clinical and possibly surgical findings in the five Marshallese coming to Brookhaven.

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