



UNITED STATES
ATOMIC ENERGY COMMISSION
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October 11, 1965

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MEMORANDUM FOR CHAIRMAN SEABORG
COMMISSIONER PALFREY
COMMISSIONER RAMEY
COMMISSIONER TAPE

pd THROUGH GENERAL MANAGER *John V. ...*

SUBJECT: RECENT INFORMATION ON THYROID DISEASE IN THE
MARSHALLESE ISLANDS

Dr. Robert A. Conard of the Medical Department, Brookhaven National Laboratory, has just returned from an interim visit to the Marshall Islands to check on possible further development of thyroid abnormalities in the Rongelapese accidentally exposed to fallout on March 1, 1954. He was accompanied by Dr. J. E. Rall, a consultant thyroid specialist of the National Institutes of Health.

It will be recalled that, as of mid-summer, benign nodules had been found in a total of five adolescents exposed at ages of two to seven years; one adult female, forty-one years old, had been found to have a malignant nodule. All successfully underwent surgery for removal of the abnormal tissue. Attached is a copy of our July 12, 1965, memorandum to you describing the successful surgery for two children and the adult.

During the current August examination, nodules were found in three additional adolescents and two adults. The contours of the thyroids of two more adolescents, two young adults, and one man approaching middle age were sufficiently different from normal to cause Drs. Conard and Rall to describe them as questionable.

To summarize, there are now eleven of eighty-two Marshallese with definite abnormalities of their thyroid tissues and five more are considered questionably so.

Department of Energy

US DOE ARCHIVES	
326 US ATOMIC ENERGY	
RG	COMMISSION
Collection	<i>Former Comm. Seaborg Files</i>
Box	<i>69</i>
Folder	<i>OTM 2 INCIDENCE OF THYROID CANCER OR OTHER DISEASES IN THE EXPOSED GROUPS</i>

STATUS VERIFIED
BY *Walter ...* DATE *5/5/81*

NON-CCRP

July 12, 1965

MEMORANDUM FOR: CHAIRMAN SEABORG
COMMISSIONER PALFREY
COMMISSIONER RABEY
COMMISSIONER TAPE

THROUGH GENERAL MANAGER

SUBJECT: THYROID DISEASE IN RONGELAP ISLANDERS

During the week of July 5, 1965, the three Rongelapese who were brought to this country for study at Brookhaven National Laboratory were operated on at the Lahey Clinic, Boston. You will recall that thyroid tumors were noted at the 1965 medical examination of those exposed to fallout in March 1954 from the Bravo Test.

The two teen-age boys were found to have each a solitary benign tumor of the thyroid. These nodules were removed surgically. The middle-aged woman was found to have a carcinoma of the thyroid gland with some metastases to local structures. A sub-total thyroidectomy was carried out. In her case, the prognosis is fair. She will be given 20 millicuries of Iodine-131 therapeutically to destroy persisting thyroid tissue.

It is interesting that the dose of radioiodine to the thyroid gland in the case of the woman is estimated at about 160 rads, or approximately one-tenth that to the glands of the youths. Presently under consideration is the administration of desiccated thyroid tablets prophylactically to all the Rongelapese who were at Rongelap or Ailinginae at the time of fallout.

Charles L. Dunham, M.D.
Director, Division of
Biology and Medicine

sent to 7/14/65

cc: Secretariat (2)
GM
AGM/RD
BMA

BM DIRECTOR AGM/RD GM
DUNHAM:RME

7/12/65

D/K Study

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