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# U. S. CHILD BUREAU TO STUDY FALL-OUT

## New Group to Map Campaign Against Genetic Hazards —X-Ray Dangers Cited—

WASHINGTON, Nov. 7.—Dr. Martha M. Elliot said today the Children's Bureau was establishing a "National Committee to Reduce Hazards to Inheritance and Child Development."

The chief of the Children's Bureau told the fifty-fifth annual conference of the Association of State and Territorial Health Officers that this committee "will give national leadership to, and help coordinate planning for, research and other activities designed to reduce reproductive wastage and safeguard normal fetal development."

Dr. Elliot led into this announcement with a reference to the much-discussed report of the National Academy of Sciences and National Research Council on "The Biological Effects of Atomic Radiation." She said this document was "of great significance to child development and to the population as whole."

A special committee, she said, will bring together information on the extent of hazards to inheritance and child development from continued fall-out of hydrogen bombs and other sources of radiation, including X-rays.

"As you know, the human embryo, the fetus, infants, and children are especially sensitive to X-ray radiation," she told the state health officers. "The results may range from genetic mutations in succeeding generations when the gonads are exposed, to embryonic damage when a pregnant woman receives excessive dosage on the pelvic organs, to damage of the blood-forming organs with resulting leukemia when radiation to the whole body is excessive."

"The report is specific with respect to the maximum cumulative exposure to the gonads which is safe according to present knowledge. It recommends the adoption of a national standard of maximum exposure to radiation which is consistent with safety."

"The report also emphasizes the importance of re-examining our current practices in the use of X-ray or fluoroscopy in providing medical services. Some of these appear to expose infants and children and prospective parents more than is necessary or wise if a safe margin below the national standard is to be maintained."

Dr. Elliot later said in reply to questions that the personnel of the new committee had not been selected, but that it would include both atomic scientists and physicians.

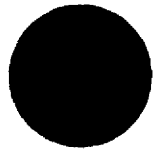
She said it would not engage

in research, but would draw together information on all phases of this modern problem. These would include hazards to young workers in plants and hazards from atomic wastes. It would also explore dangers to normal birth not related to radiation. An example of those would be the injuries to the central nervous system resulting from infectious diseases such as measles.

Dr. Herman Hilleboe, New York Health Commission, reported to the meeting that 57 per cent of the first hundred totally disabled persons put on his state's special rehabilitation program had improved. This program was started two years ago at the West Haverstraw State Rehabilitation Center under a \$400,000 fund allocated to find out what could be done toward returning the totally disabled to normal life.

The check of the first hundred, Dr. Hilleboe said, showed that some who had been bedridden were now in wheel chairs; some who had been in wheel chairs were ambulatory. Some women who had been in forced idleness had resumed housework. Men were earning spending money by trained. Two had returned to jobs.

Dr. Hilleboe highly recommended that all states set up similar rehabilitation programs.



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