

DISCUSSION PAPER

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24 March 94

SUBJECT

Subj: HUMAN RADIATION RESEARCH REVIEW (HRRR)--INFO ON NAVY'S
HYDRA II STUDY

ISSUE

- o Following unclassified information provided on Navy's Operation Hydra II Study in event questions arise; however, recommend appropriate Congressional notification prior to providing details of study.

BACKGROUND

- o Purpose of study was by using conventional explosives, to test nuclear weapon depth charge/blast effect, seismic signal, and distribution of radioactivity in water column.
- o Operation Hydra II was Release to Environment (**not human**) Experiment
 - Short-lived radioactivity released to the environment.
 - Involved four underwater detonations using conventional explosives (10,000-pound charges) laced with traces of radioactivity.
 - Conducted off San Clemente Island, CA.
 - Sponsored by Naval Radiological Defense Laboratory (NRDL) in 1961.
 - NRDL previously under Bureau of Ships but since disestablished.
- o Operation Hydra II Study includes classified data; Navy is in process of redacting classified portions to make documents releasable.
 - Extent of known public disclosures includes:
 - California Fish and Game Commission conducted collateral study during Hydra II to assess radioactive contamination in marine life.
 - Letter of Appreciation sent to crew for participation in project.
- o One claim has been filed by individual on ship that supported operation; radiation exposure data not collected on him, so extent of exposure not known.
- o Radiation Health Physicist (Navy O-6) researching records at Federal Records Center and National Archives in San Bruno, CA for **any** cases of NRDL using human subjects in radiation testing.