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CAPT Jim Bryant
N312Q X54726
21 January 1994

TALKING PAPER

STATUS OF NAVY HUMAN RADIATION RESEARCH REVIEW FOR 24 JANUARY MEETING WITH DR. DEUTCH

ISSUE

- Provide status of Navy efforts in human radiation research review to brief Dr Deutch at 1300 24 January 1994.

TALKING POINTS

- On 3 JAN 94, Navy initiated efforts to determine any past involvement in human radiation testing.
- Over 30 Navy organizations were contacted with informal guidance to identify and report any past involvement in human radiation testing.
- Navy Surgeon General and Chief of Naval Research have identified cases where radiation was involved in experiments with people and established task forces to conduct an extensive investigation.

RESULTS OF ONR ISSUES (BACKGROUND AT TAB A)

- ONR has reviewed over 4,000 contract records and found 15 contracts with universities that need to be reviewed because they may contain information on human radiation testing.
- No Navy involvement with Dr. Saenger's full body radiation experiments at University of Cincinnati, even though Navy was implicated by the media.
- ONR did co-sponsor radioisotope research at MIT with the AEC between 1947 and 1955. Three papers, which were published on this research, have been located and two have been obtained for detailed study. The issue of informed consent still under investigation.

RESULTS OF BUMED ISSUES (BACKGROUND AT TAB B)

- Since the mid-1940's, the Bureau of Medicine and Surgery has had an ongoing research program using radioisotopes to improve diagnosis and treatment. This research used volunteer subjects and the results were published in medical literature.

- A review of about 3,000 titles from the Defense Technical Information Center identified 514 which may contain information on human radiation testing. An abstract review is in progress. Other services will be informed as appropriate.
- 13 JAN 94 Associated Press report is correct that Navy used radioactive isotopes to evaluate the treatment of parasitic diseases. The final research report, which was publicly available in 1946, has been provided to Dr. Soper, Principal Deputy to Dr. Smith. All subjects were volunteers, but we are unable to identify the people involved.
- 1991 Bureau of Medicine and Surgery conducted a review of radiation use in treating middle ear problems which revealed 732 submariners were involved in a study to determine if this procedure would help people pass submarine escape training. This study found the procedure effective and was used at the Navy Submarine School until the early 1950's. The Bureau of Medicine and Surgery review did not estimate the number of personnel treated. Other sources have suggested that as many as 5,000 submariners may have been treated. This procedure was extensively used from the 1920's into the 1960's in the civilian community to treat ear infections and deafness. Follow-up studies on civilian use indicated no short or long-term effects.

QUESTIONS INVOLVING STANDARD PRACTICE IN THE 1940'S AND 1950'S

- Volunteers were obtained from the staffs of hospitals and research units to undergo a nuclear medicine study, e.g., thyroid uptake, to determine the set of "normals" with which to compare patient results. Volunteers included students, staff and in some cases foreign nationals. Records of who volunteered probably do not exist.
- Students (physicians and technicians) performed diagnostic x-ray and nuclear medicine exams on each other as part of their training. While student rosters may be available, records of exams performed probably do not exist.

BACKGROUND ON ONR ISSUES

On 31 DEC 93, Boston Globe reported Office of Naval Research funds were used in radioisotope experiments at MIT between 1947 and 1955. Three papers have been located, having been published in open scientific literature, and did address clinical investigations using radioisotopes. Two of these papers have been obtained for detailed study and they are trying to get the third. This research was co-sponsored by the Office of Naval Research and the Atomic Energy Commission. **NOTE: OFFICE OF NAVAL RESEARCH HAS DETERMINED THAT THE RESEARCH PAPERS INDICATE THE AMOUNTS OF RADIOISOTOPES USED DID MEET ACCEPTED STANDARDS THEN AND THOSE OF TODAY. ISSUE OF INFORMED CONSENT IS STILL BEING INVESTIGATED.**

The Office of Naval Research has found no records of Navy involvement with Dr. Eugene Saenger's work involving full body radiation experiments at the University of Cincinnati. Dr. Saenger confirmed this by telephone. **NOTE: MEDIA HAS IMPLICATED THE NAVY WITH THIS STUDY, BUT DEFENSE TECHNICAL INFORMATION CENTER FILES INDICATE ONLY DEFENSE NUCLEAR AGENCY AND ARMY SPONSORSHIP.**

Office of Naval Research has reviewed over 4,000 contract records. The search indicates about 15 possible contracts with institutions of higher education that might have involved radiation. **NOTE: RESULTS BASED ON THE WORD "RADIATION" APPEARING IN THE TITLE OF CONTRACTS.**

BACKGROUND ON BUMED ISSUES

On 13 JAN 94 Associated Press ran a story on a Naval Medical Research Institute Laboratory Report regarding the evaluation of using radioactive isotopes as a treatment for parasitic diseases. This enabled researchers to determine the distribution and retention of the drug (antimony), which was used to treat parasitic diseases, without having to do a biopsy of the person's organs. The final research report, which is obtainable and was publicly available in April 1946, indicates the subjects of the tests were volunteers, but does not give their names or other supporting documentation.

Several articles have discussed 5,000 submariners receiving radiation treatment for middle ear problems that interfered with pressure equalization (metal capsule containing radium inserted through the nose and held for several minutes). The Navy Bureau of Medicine and Surgery conducted a review of this treatment on submariners in 1991 based upon the available literature. This review indicates radiation treatment was given to 732 submariners involved in a study to determine the effectiveness of this established medical procedure to improve ear equalization to allow personnel with ear problems to complete submarine escape training. This review also found that the treatment of 60 naval aviators was documented in a 1946 USN medical bulletin.

The BUMED review has no estimate of how many personnel were treated after the study showed the treatment to be effective. It is known this treatment was used by the Navy's Submarine school at Groton, CT until the early 1950's. **NOTE: THE PROCEDURE USED WAS DEVELOPED IN THE 1920'S AND EXTENSIVELY USED BY THE CIVILIAN COMMUNITY WELL INTO THE 1960'S TO PREVENT EAR INFECTIONS DUE TO POOR DRAINAGE AND TO TREAT DEAFNESS. SEVERAL FOLLOW-UP STUDIES ON CIVILIAN USE HAVE BEEN PUBLISHED, NONE OF WHICH INDICATES SHORT OR LONG TERM ADVERSE EFFECTS FROM THE TYPE OF TREATMENT.**

DOE LETTER TO THOSE WHO CONTACTED THEM

FROM: DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY, WASHINGTON, DC 20585

DEAR MR:

THANK YOU FOR YOUR LETTER DETAILING YOUR CONCERNS REGARDING GOVERNMENT-SPONSORED HUMAN RADIATION EXPERIMENTS.

PRESIDENT BILL CLINTON AND SECRETARY HAZEL O'LEARY BELIEVE THAT THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT SHOULD MAKE INFORMATION ON THESE EXPERIMENTS PUBLICLY AVAILABLE WHILE PROTECTING CONFIDENTIALITY OF THE SUBJECT'S AND THEIR FAMILIES. ANY INFORMATION YOU PROVIDE FOR THIS INITIATIVE IS VOLUNTARY, BUT WITHOUT THIS INFORMATION WE MAY NOT BE ABLE TO REFER YOUR MATERIAL TO THE APPROPRIATE ORGANIZATION FOR A FOLLOW-UP INVESTIGATION. IN THIS CONNECTION, YOU MAY BE ASSURED THAT ANY PERSONAL AND CONFIDENTIAL INFORMATION WHICH YOU MAY PROVIDE WILL BE COLLECTED AND HANDLED IN ACCORDANCE WITH THE PRIVACY ACT OF 1974.

ON JANUARY 18, 1994, PRESIDENT CLINTON ISSUED THE (ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON HUMAN RADIATION EXPOSURES) EXECUTIVE ORDER THAT ESTABLISHES CRITERIA BY WHICH THE HUMAN RADIATION EXPERIMENTS WILL BE EVALUATED.

THE MATERIAL YOU SUBMITTED, CITING YOUR PERSONAL EXPOSURES INVOLVING POSSIBLE EXPOSURE TO RADIATION, HAS BEEN EVALUATED AND NOT FOUND TO FALL UNDER THE RESPONSIBILITY OR JURISDICTION OF THE DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY. HOWEVER, IT DOES APPEAR TO FALL UNDER THE AUTHORITY OF THE DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE. THEREFORE, THE MATERIAL YOU SUBMITTED HAS BEEN FORWARDED TO THE NUCLEAR TEST PERSONNEL REVIEW PROGRAM. WRITTEN CORRESPONDENCE PERTAINING TO YOUR FILE SHOULD BE DIRECTED TO THAT PROGRAM VIA THE HOT LINE, CONTACT NUMBER FOR FILE IS 1-800-462-3683. THE DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY VALUES YOUR INFORMATION AND OPINIONS ON THESE VERY SENSITIVE ISSUES.

SINCERELY,

PETER N. BRUSH
PRINCIPAL DEPUTY ASSISTANT SECRETARY
ENVIRONMENTAL SAFETY AND HEALTH

* INFORMATION REGARDING GOVERNMENT-SPONSORED HUMAN RADIATION IS BEING COLLECTED UNDER THE AUTHORITY OF THE ATOMIC ENERGY ACT OF 1954, AS AMENDED BY THE DEPARTMENT OF ENERGY ORGANIZATION ACT, AND BY EXECUTIVE ORDERS 10865, 10450, AND 12358.