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**Statement  
of  
Dr. Harold Smith  
to the  
Subcommittee on Administrative Law and Government Relations  
Committee on the Judiciary**

**February 2, 1994**

Mr. Chairman and Members of the Committee, it is an honor for me to appear before you today on behalf of the Department of Defense. I am accompanied by Ms. Joan Pierre, Director for Radiation Sciences at the Defense Nuclear Agency, who will be able to respond to your questions about the details of the Nuclear Test Personnel Review (NTPR). In addition, Ms. Jeanne Fites, Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense (Requirements and Resources) within the Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness, is here as well.

You have heard the description of the Interagency Working Group now in place to conduct the search and retrieval of records of human radiation experiments. It is not necessary to describe that process again. The Department of Defense is a full and active participant in this process, and the Secretary of Defense has placed a high priority on this project. As the Interagency Working Group was established, he appointed personnel from the highest levels of the Department to serve on the working group. Simultaneously, he charged those persons with the additional duty of serving on a steering committee panel formed to oversee the Department's search and retrieval endeavor.

The steering committee is acting as a "board of directors" for a Command Center which we have established. That center is headed by a Rear Admiral and is to be the collection point and clearinghouse for records discovered in this project. As one might imagine, this retrieval process requires an extensive search. Based upon the experience of DoD's NTPR program, the command center is to be the central point to which records can be referred, cataloged, and reviewed.

While we cannot simply go into the attics or cellars of the Department and pull out boxes labelled "Human Radiation Experiments", the Department will not be deterred by the complexity or difficulty of the task confronting us. We are fully committed to this effort. We are acting as quickly as possible to find and catalog records. We will collect those records and review them. We will release them as comprehensively and as soon as possible, recognizing that we must proceed in a way that protects the privacy of citizens who may have been participants, knowingly or unknowingly, in those experiments.

It is important to understand that this is a discovery process requiring some time before a full report can be provided to Congress and the people of this country. We have all read or heard media reports of radiation experiments in which human subjects participated. They will all be a part of our search. In the interim, we want to make it clear and emphasize to you that we are fully committed to this effort. We are acting expeditiously to find and catalog records. We will collect those records and review them. We will release them as comprehensively and as soon as possible, recognizing that we must proceed in a way that protects the privacy of citizens who may have been participants, wittingly or unwittingly, in those experiments.

## **NUCLEAR TEST PERSONNEL REVIEW**

In the meantime, DoD continues to administer the Nuclear Test Personnel Review. This program was initiated in the late 1970s to identify and assist veterans and selected DoD civilians who participated in the U.S. atmospheric nuclear testing. In 1988, NTPR was expanded to cover DoD personnel who participated in the post-war occupation of Hiroshima and Nagasaki, Japan. The program provides individuals with participation data and exposure levels to assist them in applying for health care or compensation from the Departments of Veterans Affairs and Labor, which are responsible for determining an individual is eligible for health care or compensation.

As of January 1, 1994, 205,472 individuals were identified as having participated in the U.S. atmospheric nuclear testing program. Another 195,753 DoD personnel were associated with the occupation of post-war Hiroshima and Nagasaki. Over the past five years, about 2,000 new program participants have been added to the program annually.

Reaching out to these individuals has been a challenge. DoD has relied on an outreach program to encourage them to contact us. A key component of that outreach has been a toll free hot line. Contact has been established with approximately 70,000 individuals.

The Department of Defense, and the Defense Nuclear Agency remains fully committed to its philosophy of honesty, candor, and thoroughness in the management of this program.

The Department of Defense's full participation in the Human Radiation Interagency Working Group and its administration of the Nuclear Test Personnel Review represent an intense collective attempt to accumulate information necessary to identify those individuals who participated in radiation experiments. Candor and openness have marked each of these endeavors and will continue to serve as hallmarks by which this administration conducts these efforts.

Those brave military personnel, their families, and the American people deserve no less than a full accounting of experiments in which human subjects were used.