



DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY
OFFICE OF THE CHIEF OF NAVAL OPERATIONS
WASHINGTON, DC 20350-2000

18 JAN 1993

IN REPLY REFER TO

MEMORANDUM FOR THE ASSISTANT TO THE SECRETARY OF DEFENSE (ATOMIC ENERGY)

SUBJECT: STATUS REPORT ON THE NAVY'S HUMAN RADIATION RESEARCH REVIEW -
INFORMATION MEMORANDUM

This memorandum is for your use at the Senator Glenn hearings.

On 3 January 1994, the Navy initiated efforts to determine if there had been any past involvement in human radiation testing. Over 30 Navy organizations have been contacted and are actively involved. The Navy Surgeon General and Chief of Naval Research have identified cases where radiation was involved in experiments using human subjects.

The Navy Medical Department has had an active, ongoing research program since the mid-1940's using radioisotopes to improve methods of diagnosis and treatment. Volunteer human test subjects have participated in these studies and the results have been published in open literature.

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.**

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 literatures, and did address clinical investigations using radioisotopes. These papers are being obtained for detailed study. 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 20 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.**

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