



Department of Energy
Washington, D.C. 20585

October 29, 1985

URGENT

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*J. Robertson
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workers*

REPOSITORY DOE-FORRESTAL

MEMORANDUM FOR: Charles DeLisi, ER-70

FROM: Jeff Sherwood, CP-22 *JS*

SUBJECT: response to inquiry on "human experimentation studies"

Here is a brief description of research that is the subject of the recent congressional subcommittee report. I developed it to provide to the United States Information Agency per a request from their policy office. Please concur in its release or suggest appropriate changes.

Background Information on Research Projects Involving Human Test Subjects and Radiation

From the mid-1940's to the early 1970's, the Manhattan Engineering Project and the Atomic Energy Commission (predecessor agencies to today's U.S. Department of Energy) funded projects involving human test subjects and radiation. This research was conducted for a variety of reasons. In the early years, there was an urgent need for data in order to establish safety standards for the thousands of workers producing and using radioactive materials in the weapons industry. Other research provided basic knowledge about the biological effects of radiation. The research also involved the development of medical uses of radiation in diagnosing and treating cancer and other diseases.

This research was conducted under accepted *have been* medical and ethical guidelines of the time. These guidelines ~~changed~~ changed over time and the agencies adopted the new guidelines as they were developed. While radioisotopes continue to be tested for new diagnostic and therapeutic uses, under today's strict ethical guidelines human research involving the effects of radiation would not be conducted.

Information about this research has been published in the scientific literature since World War II and in the popular press since the '60s. This research has been the subject of two Congressional hearings and has been included in testimony before numerous congressional hearings over the years. Detailed information about all the studies was provided to Congress in 1984.

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FOLDER "HUMAN EXPERIMENTATION" COLLECTION MARK FEELEN

BOX NO. 2 OF 6

INQUIRY