July 12, 1965

403209

MEMORANDUM FOR: CHAIRMAN SEABORG
COMMISSIONER PALFREY
COMMISSIONER RAMEY
COMMISSIONER TAPE

THROUGH GENERAL MANAGER

SUBJECT: THYROID DISEASE IN RONGELAP ISLANDERS

DOE ARCHIVES

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

During the week of July 5, 1965, the three Rongelapese who were brought to this country for study at Brookhaven National Laboratory were operated on at the Lahey Clinic, Boston. You will recall that thyroid tumors were noted at the 1965 medical examination of those exposed to fallout in March 1954 from the Bravo Test.

The two teen-age boys were found to have each a solitary benign tumor of the thyroid. These nodules were removed surgically. The middle-aged woman was found to have a carcinoma of the thyroid gland with some metastases to local structures. A subtotal thyroidectomy was carried out. In her case, the prognosis is fair. She will be given 30 millicuries of Iodine-131 therapeutically to destroy persisting thyroid tissue.

It is interesting that the dose of radioiodine to the thyroid tissue in the case of the woman is estimated at about 100 rads, or approximately one-tenth that to the glands of the youths. Presently under consideration is the administration of dessicated thyroid tablets prophylactically to all the Rongelapese who were at Rongelap or Alinginae at the time of fallout.

Charles L. Dunham, M.D.
Director, Division of
Biology and Medicine

cc: Secretariat (2)
GM
AGM/RD
DMA

BM DIRECTOR AGM/RD GM

DUNHAM:RMB

7/12/65

54