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SFOO
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BLOOD COUNTS FOLLOWING TEST OPERATIONS

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This memo is in reply to the question which was verbally asked by John Newell today. As I understand it, GTO has received a request from EG&G to approve blood counts for their personnel who will be returning from the Forward Area. I believe we are all aware of the reason why this organization has a particular interest in this matter. For your and for their benefit I would like to recommend a somewhat different solution to the problem.

Until we get into the field of massive doses of radiation (25 r to 50 r, at least), blood counts are of absolutely no value in determining the presence or absence of exposure to radiation. The principal value of routine blood counts is to detect as early as possible the existence of some form of blood disease which might possibly be attributed to radiation. This is the reason why we like to have blood counts done on test personnel before a test starts. There is little or no actual value in repeating such counts again at the completion of a test unless one at the start showed some abnormality. It would be my recommendation, therefore, that EG&G, as well as other concerns in a similar position, should require all their employees to have annual physical examinations carried out by a competent physician. These exams should include a complete blood count and a chest X ray. Actually, for a firm like EG&G this is no more than good business practice; most of their workers are valuable to them the year around and most of them represent investments which are worth protecting. If any of their workers are terminating their employment at the close of a test operation they should undergo a physical exam including blood count and X ray at the time. In addition, I am perfectly certain that such a program would satisfy the administrative requirements of all test organizations and that special pretest exams would not be necessary.

Wherever possible, it is advisable to have periodic examinations of this type performed by the same physician. Some people in the EG&G organization might like to have theirs done in Boston, some in Las Vegas, and possibly some in Albuquerque or Honolulu. I would be very happy, if requested, to assist EG&G in setting up a comprehensive physical examination program to cover all of their employees; I am sure that such a procedure would be a thoroughly justifiable expense.

ORIGINAL SIGNED BY THOMAS L. SHIPMAN, M. D.

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