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COLLECTION MARKEY FILES

403765

BOX NO. 6 CF 6

FOLDER MARSHALLESE / HEALTHCARE

Memo to Dr. CWE

Subject Medical Studies of the Marshall Islands Residents Exposed to Fallout (RPIS No. 000032)

I would like you to consider preparing a reevaluation of the research character of subject program, and, if concerned in ~~with~~ same, ~~to~~ have this program transferred back into OHER/HHAD.

I would say that it's more-or-less an article of faith that any human use of preexposure to external radiation or radioactive materials becomes a use for research, simply because our knowledge of radiation effects in human subjects is notoriously lacking. In this respect, numbers don't enter into the decision whether or not medical follow-up / evaluation / treatment (if necessary) represents research or "simple" medical care. In other words, epidemiologic considerations are not the only factor in determining the scientific research character, such as in the case of large populations exposed to low-level radiation.

In the case of the conglomeration of activities, loosely known as the Marshall Islands (M.I.) program, there is no question that some of these activities have a ~~medical~~ service, rather than a research character. The medical part, however, i.e., the part that concerns the Marshallese exposed to fallout radiation on March 1, 1954, and covering ~~only~~ persons inhabiting Ailinginme, Thlink, and Rongelap at that time, plus an equally large group acting as controls (all together about 600 people)

~~Excluded, Pass~~

I know (and understand quite well!) that Dr. Penet  
is extremely reluctant to have us involved in peacetime  
matters such as the operation of ships, general ~~not~~ health  
care efforts (related or unrelated to the Boston Bill), survey  
type activities, etc. I believe we can keep these matters  
outside our mission by stipulating that all service  
support related to The Medical Studies Program 000032 shall  
be the responsibility of ~~the Surgeon General~~, and that  
medical policy matters related to the MS, but unrelated to  
project 000032, shall be the responsibility of A&E.

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