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Memorandum for the NCI Chernobyl Leukemia Working Group

Subject: Status of the Project and Plans for One-Day Meeting

I can report that Phase I continues to go moderately well, especially in regard to the epidemiologic and hematologic tasks we set for this pilot phase. The dosimetric work, the most difficult, is in full stride but closure in the sense of the selection of a single method of dose estimation is not yet in view. Our delays in getting equipment and supplies to Dr Romanenko's staff have slowed the progress of the work to the extent that a six-month extension through the end of the calendar year is most likely. This would mean that we would probably not see the final report on Phase I until late fall. In preparation for a meeting in the fall I would like to get the group together soon to consider how we will prepare for the evaluation of the Phase I report and how we will consider it in concert with our associates in Ukraine. To that end I am enclosing calendars for the next several months that I trust you will mark to show on which of the now open days you are **not** available for a one-day meeting in Bethesda/Rockville.

To refresh your understanding of the project I enclose several documents that may be helpful and also address your attention to the protocol, section 5.0, subsections 5.1-5.2; in my copy (dated 13 June, 1996) these are pages 17-30. To make it easier to prepare the final report on Phase I we have abstracted from those pages the specific tasks we wanted performed, and have proposed to Dr Romanenko that the final report address those tasks, showing briefly what was done and with what success. Some of us have volunteered to assist Dr Romanenko's staff in the preparation of the material, item by item. We'll send you this consolidated summary of tasks in advance of the meeting.

I don't want to send you too many documents at this time but believe you will want to read the following.:

- 1) Dr Finch's report of the diagnostic review he organized in January
- 2) Dr Finch's report of his visit last month
- 3) Dr Howe's report of his visit at the same time.

Unfortunately there is no simple document summarizing the situation with respect to dosimetry and Dr Bouville is away. I can say, however, that progress is being made on the comparison of several different methods: official records, EPR, environmental dose reconstruction, and cytogenetics (FISH). A new method using environmental measurements and interview

information concerning job assignments and other behavioral characteristics is under study, including comparison with other methods. All of this work involves duplicate or triplicate estimates on the same individual.

I must also report to you that a major administrative change has taken place within NCI in regard to the project. All Chernobyl research has been moved from the Division of Cancer Biology (DCB) where the extramural Radiation Effects Branch headed by Dr Wachholz is located, to the Division of Cancer Epidemiology and Genetics (DCEG) headed by Dr Joseph F Fraumeni who has assigned it to the Radiation Epidemiology Branch headed by Dr Elaine Ron where I have been located for some years. All the DCB personnel on the project, Dr Ihor Masnyk (Project Director), Dr Andre Bouville, and Dr Nicholas Luckyanov (dosimetrist) have been moved to DCEG and the Radiation Epidemiology Branch. With this move has come increased funding for Chernobyl projects, and increased administrative oversight, the latter reflecting the criticism encountered by NCI last fall at the time of the Senate investigation of the I-131 study whose results were not promptly released. With the move to DCEG also comes freer access to epidemiologic and other technical expertise for which the Division is well known. NCI also now has a support services contract with the epidemiology group at the Columbia School of Public Health; Geoff Howe is the PI. This contract makes available not only more of Geoff's time for the leukemia study and the thyroid study, but also a wide variety of Columbia University talent and funds for training and other essential services.

Again, I would like to emphasize that the primary objective of this meeting is to re-familiarize all members of the working group with what we asked be done in Phase I and with what will have been done by meeting-time. It will be preparatory to the later (fall) evaluation of the final report on Phase I and the final recommendation as to Phase II, that we said we would work out with our Ukrainian colleagues (protocol 5.3.1). It is important that each of you have all your questions answered by the time of that fall meeting. Between now and the proposed summer meeting you will be sent an agenda and the consolidated list of the Phase I tasks together with a brief preliminary report on each. In the meantime, if you have any specific questions or suggestions about the project or the proposed summer meeting, please call or e-mail Dr Finch or myself. He may be reached by phone at (609) 342-2206 and by e-mail at Finch@UMDNJ.edu.


Gilbert W Beebe, PhD, Chairman

Cc Drs Ron & Masnyk

Working Group

Dr Boice	Dr Jensen
Dr Bouville	Dr Littlefield
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Dr Howe	