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REVIEW OF DOCUMENT BY KNOWLTON

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This document entitled "The Changes in the Blood of Humans Chronically Exposed to Low Level Gamma Radiation," by Knowlton, has been reviewed by this office and we concur in the opinion of Dr. Stoeckle that the fact that the studies were performed upon people does not subject the A.S.C. to undue criticism. In fact, we think the contrary would be true.

The results of the studies indicate that the tolerance levels for chronic exposure to gamma radiation which have been accepted both within the A.S.C. and elsewhere may be too high. We can see the possibility of a shattering effect on the morale of the employees if they became aware that there was substantial reason to question the standards of safety under which they are working. In the hands of labor unions the results of this study would add substance to demands for extra-hazardous pay. We can also see the definite possibility that general knowledge of the results of this study might increase the number of claims of occupational injury due to radiation and place a powerful weapon in the hands of a plaintiff's attorney.

We call to your attention the following quotation from our memorandum of October 15, 1948, in discussing the document "Health Physics Instrumentation and Hazard Evaluation" by R. F. Evans. "on Page 33, paragraph 4, the International X-ray and Radiation Protection Commission is quoted as recommending that 'The evidence at present available appears to suggest that under satisfactory working conditions a person in normal health can tolerate exposure to X-rays or radiation gamma rays to an extent of about 0.2r/day or 1r/week.' (Emphasis supplied). It is apparent that the tolerance levels were arrived at with definite qualifications. With this bit of authoritative information a plaintiff's lawyer could make these standards appear to rest on very questionable foundations." The results of the present study tend to cast greater doubt upon the validity of the tolerance levels since the persons being studied had average exposure of only .2r/week, about 2/5 the tolerance levels.

In view of the above considerations we think the question of making this document public should be given very careful study.

C.E.W.

Wilson:ta

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