

Less Harmful Effect From Low Radiation Doses

NEW EVIDENCE that low radiation doses may have less harmful genetic effects than previously estimated is presented in a set of summary reports issued by the National Academy of Sciences-National Research Council.

Six committees on the Biological Effects of Atomic Radiation, keeping tab on the mass of scientific information that has been accumulating since its last report in 1956, have released these additional statements, in brief:

1. During the first 30 years of life the average person can tolerate not more than 10 roentgens of man-made radiation without endangering the health of his unborn offspring and any dose should be as far below this level as is feasible.

2. Experimental evidence shows that radiation-induced tumors do not begin to develop immediately after the radiation has been absorbed.

3. No new evidence has appeared to show that nuclear tests have affected the weather.

4. The significant long-range effects of the presence of radioactive isotopes in foods remain to be determined.

5. The disposal of radioactive wastes has not resulted in any significant hazard to the public, its environment or its natural resources.

6. There is no need to restrict the nuclear energy program if precautions are continued in radioactive-waste control so that the public health and safety are protected.

7. Present indications are that limited quantities of radioactive materials can safely be released in the oceans.

Science News Letter, June 4, 1960

Do You Know

The lady beetle feeds on aphids, scales and other softbodied, plant-feeding insects.

The planet Pluto is about 3,666,000,000 miles from the sun.

In the U.S., insects claim an annual toll of \$4,000,000,000 in crop losses.

The National Bureau of Standards now has plans for a liquid hydrogen refrigerator which will maintain temperatures in a bubble chamber as low as 214 degrees below zero Fahrenheit.

Questions

ASTRONOMY—What happened, according to a new theory, when centrifugal force became equal to the attraction of gravity at the solar equator? p. 356.

PHYSICS—Who were the four winners of the Atoms for Peace Awards? p. 355.

SEISMOLOGY—How do tidal waves originate? p. 357.

Photographs: Cover, Bendix Aviation Corporation; p. 355, Perkin-Elmer Corp.; p. 357, Exide Industrial Division, The Electric Storage Battery Co.; p. 359, American College of Radiology; p. 362, Fremont Davis; p. 368, Magna Wonder Knife, Inc.



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