

PART I

ATOMIC BOMB CASUALTY COMMISSION

GENERAL REPORT

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An understanding of relations between the armed forces, military government, and the Japanese government has been found to be essential for a picture of the Japanese situation. In addition, knowledge of the social and scientific outlook of the post-war Japanese is desirable.

SCAP - The responsibility of Supreme Commander Allied Powers, General Headquarters, is to deal with all matters of occupation relative to the Japanese people. This organization is entirely distinct from the military forces, Army Forces Pacific (AFPAC), posted throughout the islands, which maintains order. The military forces are not responsible for policing the Japanese, and would be called for this only in the event of a major insurrection.

FEC - General MacArthur, in his capacity as Supreme Commander of the Allied powers (SCAP) in Japan, is subordinate to the Far Eastern Commission (FEC) which meets in Washington and is composed of representatives of the occupying nations.

MEDICAL AFFAIRS - The function of the office of the chief surgeon, AFPAC, is to care for the health of occupying troops. Health matters relating to the Japanese are handled through the Public Health and Welfare Division of SCAP, and since the Atomic Bomb Casualty Study is clearly a health problem affecting Japanese only, the Commission found itself automatically under this Division. Excellent liaison and cooperation are maintained between the two offices, however, so that the Commission was very substantially aided by the office of the chief surgeon by virtue of its supply function.

A. THE COMMISSION

1. Formation:

During October, 1946, the Atomic Bomb Casualty Commission (ABCC) was formed as a result of collaborative efforts on the part of the National Research Council, the War Department, the U. S. Navy, the Public Health Service, and the American Cancer Society. The details of formation are set forth in Appendix 1.

Since the work of the Commission was to be carried out mainly in occupied territory, the War Department, through the Supreme Commander, Allied Powers, was asked to assume responsibility for the operational details. These, it may be said, were handled in an extraordinarily efficient manner.

The Commission was composed of two civilians, Dr. Austin M. Brues and Dr. Paul S. Henshaw; and three military officers, 1st Lt. Melvin A. Block and 1st Lt. James V. Neel, M.C., A.U.S., and Lt. (j.g.) Frederick W. Ullrich, (MC), U.S.N.R.

2. Objectives:

The Commission has functioned primarily in these ways: first, obtaining some first-hand technical information, and second, making a detailed report pertaining to the opportunities for a long-term study of atomic bomb casualties.

B. ACTIVITIES

1. The Commission arrived in Japan 24 November 1946 and acquainted itself as rapidly as possible with the operational procedures of the military occupation.

2. It visited Hiroshima and Nagasaki, surveyed the work being done, and ascertained the requirements for setting up a full-scale study.

3. It took certain steps in providing for an interim program between the present work and that to be carried out by a more permanent organization which is anticipated.

C. FINDINGS

1. The Commission learned that the Japanese have a well organized medical group under the auspices of the Japanese National Research Council, which is carrying out studies on both immediate and delayed atomic bomb damage in people. This organization involves investigation in at least seventeen different universities, colleges, and sanatoria (cf. Appendices 2 and 3).

2. It learned that despite great difficulties since the war, the Japanese have prepared as many as 119 manuscripts on atomic bomb injury (Appendix 3) and that these are available for publication. Whereas the studies are somewhat lacking in critical analysis according to the best scientific methods, they nevertheless represent work carried out under the most difficult circumstances and covering a set of conditions which cannot be reproduced. It is therefore, the attitude of the Commission that these papers should be preserved in whatever form the authors are willing to submit them.

3. The Commission was able to assist materially in clearing the way for publication of the Japanese reports. The plan of the Japanese calls for a four-volume monograph series (cf. Appendix 4).

4. A review of the Japanese program for long-term study indicated that practically all of the approaches considered by the Commission had also been visualized by the Japanese. The Commission suggests, however, that more thoroughness, especially in connection with controls, would be desirable. In every case, the Japanese expressed an interest in more adequate planning as long as it is compatible with facilities.

5. Realizing the need for reliable vital statistics in connection with several phases of a long-term study, the Commission investigated Japanese laws and customs governing sterilization, infanticide, autopsy,

methods of recording births, etc; it had meetings with Public Health officials, Midwives Associations, and other groups. All such groups displayed interest and while difficulties were encountered, no insurmountable problems appeared to lie ahead.

6. The Vital Statistics Section of Public Health and Welfare, SCAP, was approached regarding work in vital statistics at Hiroshima, Nagasaki, and suitable control cities. It appears that some unusual opportunities for mutual assistance are in prospect (cf. Appendix 7).

D. GENERAL IMPRESSIONS

1. The Commission's view that much valuable information can be obtained from a long-term study of atomic bomb casualties has been strengthened. The acute reaction, consisting of atrophy and repair, has for the most part passed. At the present moment, the most prominent feature is massive scar formation at the sites of burn wounds; these appear to present some new - perhaps unique - problems in surgical treatment. From previous irradiation experiences with both animals and human beings, there is good reason to believe that reproductive disturbances, malignancies of one form or another, shortened life span, altered genetic pattern, etc., will in time appear in greater or lesser degrees. The problem is one of detecting the changes and recording the events as they occur.

2. It is the view of the Commission, furthermore, that with the possible exception of genetic recessives (cf. Appendix 6), the various changes can be successfully detected and recorded. This presupposes of course the proper cooperation with the Japanese and a reasonable expenditure of funds.

E. ACCOMPLISHMENTS

1. Assuming that some kind of long-term program will be established, the ABCC has taken certain steps: (a) to provide for an interim program, and (b) to open certain channels for future development.

2. Arrangements were made for Lts. Block and Noel to remain in the area on an interim basis to maintain continuity between the present visits and those which are expected.

3. After considering various locations, Kure (30 miles from Hiroshima) was selected as the most suitable control city.

4. Temporary arrangements for working space have been made at the Red Cross Hospital in Hiroshima and at the Mutual Relief Hospital in Kure. These consist of 3 rooms at the former and 2 at the latter to be used as office, laboratory, and examining rooms during the interim period. Through Army facilities, adequate equipment has been provided.

5. Through SCAP, arrangements were made for certain Japanese personnel to assist Lts. Block and Noel as needed.

6. Clear channels have been opened for handling any future developments through SCIP.

7. Provisions were made for transient visits only to Nagasaki during the interim period.

F. FUTURE ORGANIZATION

1. If a long-term organization is to be set up, it is desirable that this be done quickly; this is because information is being lost as time passes and because the Japanese are anxious to plan their program in accord with ours.

2. In accordance with the recent Presidential directive which authorizes the National Academy of Sciences to utilize any Government facilities to set up such an organization as has been visualized for a study of atomic bomb casualties, it would seem appropriate to provide the conventional organizational structure - that is, an advisory board of 3 to 5 scientific experts, a director with attendant officers and a scientific staff. Such an organization would be unique in that there would be required foreign and domestic components. Both would of necessity be closely integrated with the Japanese organization which is already functioning. It follows then as a next step that the Academy should exercise the initiative in providing an advisory board and one or more of the main officers. The remainder of the organization might then be left in the hands of such a group.

3. The NBCC has recognized certain aspects which will probably influence the organizational planning: (a) it seems desirable that the major part of the work be done by the Japanese, thus placing the Americans in the position of expeditors and expert scientific consultants; (b) such consultants then would find it necessary to hold two positions - one in the United States, such as a university teaching or research position, and the other a consultant's position; (c) under these circumstances, a rather large portion of the budget would necessarily be devoted to travel.

4. Some consideration must be given to the advisability of a larger organization with quarters in Japan. This might well include one or more research hospitals. Such quarters, in addition to providing much needed general facilities, would aid the long-term studies of atomic bomb injury and help greatly in securing personnel for long periods.

G. INTERNATIONAL ASPECTS

1. The most vivid impression gained by the Commission was the conviction that a development such as a long-term study of atomic bomb casualties in collaboration with the Japanese, affords a most remarkable opportunity for cultivating international relations of the highest type. As indicated in Part II, the military influence and the overlordship in Japan have been removed. There remains then a people eager to adopt the

democratic principles insofar as they will serve Japan. Japan at this moment is extremely plastic and has great respect for the occupation. If we continue to handle Japan intelligently during the next few years while the new policies are being established, she will be our friend and ally for many years to come; if we handle her unwisely, she will drift to other ideologies. The ABCC or its successor may be able to play a role in this.

2. It would be in keeping with the best scientific tradition and ideals if the National Academy of Sciences would send scientific men of vision to Japan as an advisory team or panel.

3. The fate of Japan lies much more in the hands of Americans than most Americans realize; moreover, it may also be said, that the fate of America will be determined much more by the establishment of policies in Japan than most Americans realize. Because of the ascendant leadership of science today and because of American position, American science must of necessity accept a large measure of the responsibility for development.