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Radioactive fallout seminar in New York to concern health of Utah children

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RADIOACTIVE FALLOUT SEMINAR
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MISSOULA---

A symposium organized by a University of Montana professor concerning the controversial problem of the effects of radioactive fallout on health will be presented in New York City Dec. 27 during the annual meeting of the American Association for Advancement of Science.

The symposium, organized by Dr. E.W. Pfeiffer, UM zoology professor, will deal with thyroid gland studies of children in Utah and of Marshall Islands' residents who were exposed to radioactive fallout in the 1950s.

The symposium, sponsored by the AAAS and entitled the "Norman Bauer Memorial Symposium on the Hazards of Iodine-131 Fallout in Utah," was named in honor of the late Dr. Bauer, a physical chemist at Utah State University, Logan, who was a pioneer in developing evidence of high local concentrations of fallout in regions near the Nevada test site where the fallout originated.

"During the period 1955 to 1957," Dr. Pfeiffer explained, "a lot of nuclear weapons which produced radioactivity were tested very close to Southern Utah. Dr. Bauer and I both were on the USU faculty at the time and we both had small children. We were very concerned because of the high fallout readings around Logan and in the Salt Lake City vicinity."

Dr. Pfeiffer, who authored a symposium article entitled "Hazards of Iodine-131 Fallout in Utah" for Science Magazine, said that some radioactive clouds passed over Logan following the tests in Nevada.

"Dr. Bauer was first to raise questions about the possible effects of fallout on our children and others in Utah" he said.

"Dr. Bauer questioned whether the Atomic Energy Commission knew what it was doing

more

in terms of the radioactive fallout effects on human health," he continued.

"Subsequently, Dr. Bauer's doubts were confirmed," Dr. Pfeiffer concluded, "by the fact that public health authorities began an investigation into the health of Utah residents, particularly children."

Much of the investigation in Utah has concerned children living in the St. George area in Southern Utah who have been examined for possible thyroid abnormalities due to absorption of Iodine-131.

During the symposium Dec. 27, Dr. Robert A. Conard, M.D., of the Brookhaven National Laboratory, Long Island, N.Y., will discuss a study he has been conducting on residents of the Marshall Islands in the Pacific following their exposure to hydrogen bomb fallout in 1954.

Dr. Conard will review acute and late effects of exposure, particularly the development of thyroid abnormalities such as growths on the thyroid glands and retardation of growth of Marshallese children.

Others on the program will include Edward Weiss of the U.S. Public Health Service and Dr. Marvin Rallison of the University of Utah School of Medicine, Salt Lake, who have examined the Utah children, and Dr. Arthur Tamplin of the AEC-sponsored University of California Radiation Laboratory, Livermore, Calif., who will present facts concerning the amount of radiation absorbed by people living in Southern Utah.