

why we believe it is meaningful to use these recommendations as the basis for assessing the significance of levels of radiation exposure. That is why we believe that Canadians should be reassured by the fact that our findings indicate that strontium-90 levels are well below what these recommendations suggest as permissible for the whole population.

This in no way removes the necessity for continuing scientific research into the possible effects of chronic, low-level radiation exposure. In the words of the Report of the United Nations Scientific Committee on the Effects of Atomic Radiation:

"Present knowledge concerning long-term effects and their correlation with the amounts of radiation received does not permit us to evaluate with any precision the possible consequence to man of exposure to low radiation levels.... Such a situation requires that mankind proceed with great caution in view of a possible underestimation. At the same time, the possibility cannot be excluded that our present estimates exaggerate the hazards of chronic exposure to low levels of radiation. Only further intensive research can establish the true position."

Research, then, is the only path to certainty in this as in other health fields. And research will take time.

Meanwhile, we must continue and expand our present programmes. Above all, we must keep a sense of perspective on this matter. The facts do not warrant either panic or complacency. As far as the Department is concerned, we intend to keep firmly abreast of all new developments and to work closely with others, to the end that everything possible will be done to ensure the health of Canadians. Such an undertaking, I would suggest, deserves the strong support of this Association and all its members.

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