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RADIO ACTIVE POISON FROM H-BOMB ALREADY UP 300% IN MIDWEST SOIL

Soil tests conducted by the Atomic Energy Commission show that "farm lands of Wisconsin and Illinois have already been contaminated by the highly dangerous bone-cancer producing radioactive dust from atomic bomb tests," Senator Hubert H. Humphrey declared last night in an address at a Winona DFL "Bean Feed".

"According to Commissioner Willard Libby of the Atomic Energy Commission, the concentration of Strontium 90 in the soil of certain areas of Illinois and Wisconsin increased almost 300% from 1953 to 1955, and that the Strontium 90 now in the soil amounts to the equivalent of about 40 'sunshine units'.

"What is true of Wisconsin and Illinois in undoubtedly true of Minnesota soil, as the proximity of the midwest to the Nevada bomb test center has exposed us to as much as 50 percent more of the bone killing Strontium 90 than other areas of the world.

"You better add 'Strontium 90' to your vocabulary -- because you are going to have to live with it, or die with it. Radioactive Strontium is described by the National Academy of Sciences as a substance whose 'unique combination of qualities makes it especially dangerous'. For example, it decays very slowly; it is taken up from the soil with calcium in the food we eat, and it is absorbed in the bone structure.

"Children absorb it more rapidly than grown-ups. In only small concentrations it can cause cancer of the bones.

"Findings of the National Academy of Science indicate that the present concentrations in the bones of children already have reached what may be termed one so-called 'sunshine' unit, and the United Kingdom Medical Research Council has officially reported that 'immediate consideration would be required if the concentration in human bones showed signs of rising greatly about 10 such units'.

"Yet Dr. Libby is authority for the statement that we must expect, assuming that no further weapons are fired, that the body burden for children born now in America eventually would amount to between 4 and 10 sunshine units.

"We should remember, however, that only 10 to 20 percent of the radioactive Strontium created by past tests by the United States and the Soviets has as yet fallen to earth from the radiostrontium reservoir in the stratosphere. As the remainder falls to earth, the radioactive strontium concentrations in human bones will increase proportionately beyond present levels.

"Even if neither the United States nor the Soviets nor any other country ever explodes another hydrogen weapon, it is estimated by competent scientists and medical researchers that children all over the world, will, in the course of their lives, reach concentrations somewhat above the 10 units regarded as the danger point.

"In the face of such threatened peril, can we risk continued H-bomb experiments? Can we turn our backs on every possible effort to reach an enforceable international agreement to curb such H-bomb tests?

"That is one of the crucial choices the American people must make November 6, for that is the challenge Adlai Stevenson has been courageous enough to break out from behind the Administration's curtain of silence and carry to the American people," Senator Humphrey said.



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