

## Office Memorandum

UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

TO : Roy B. Snapp, Secretary

408704

DATE: July 12, 1954

FROM : John C. Bigher, M.D., Director  
Division of Biology and Medicine*John C. Bigher*

SUBJECT: JAPANESE EXPEDITION TO THE PACIFIC PROVING GROUNDS AREA

SYMBOL: BM:JCB

With reference to your query regarding the details of newspaper stories about the Japanese expedition to the Pacific Proving Ground, the best summary seems to be that from Ambassador Allison in his dispatch No. 49 of July 7 which is as follows:

"Research vessel SHUNKOTSU MARU returned July 4 after 9,000 mile survey of Pacific test area. Detailed report and samplings submitted to fisheries agency upon arrival. Data being studied by new group, Bikini waters investigation liaison council, with findings 'to be treated as national property and given to the world.'

"Newspapers of following day quote fishing agency as announcing that: (a) Interim reports show fish from test area edible unless caught in northern equatorial current; (b) Radioactive contamination of sea water and marine life strongest between 8 and 12 degrees north latitude west of Bikini; (c) Most radioactivity on tuna found in internal organs and around gills very little in flesh; (d) Plankton much more radioactive than fish; (e) Exposure to sea water in area to be avoided; (f) Only minor radioactivity found in air; (g) Safest fishing area south of Bikini where no radioactivity found; (h) Navigation not jeopardized barring further tests in area.

"Fisheries spokesman envisaged another expedition next year also stated Pacific current would not bring contaminated water to Japanese Coast.

"Newsreel taken aboard now showing Tokyo and substantial daily output from nine newspapermen participating expedition. Press accounts largely factual and moderate in tone, some of them constructively pointed out (a) Radioactive fish eaten during trip; (b) Certain scientists aboard have scoffed at overnervous dumping of radioactive fish here; (c) Highest radioactivity encountered was point 65 milliroentgen per day or one percent of danger limit."

While it will be sometime before we have our own data in hand, the newspaper accounts which I have read seem temperate in tone and do not seem out of line with what we already know.

cc: John Hall, Sp. Projects

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