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MEMORANDUM of Telephone Conversation between General Groves and Lt. Col. Rea,  
Oak Ridge Hospital, 9:00 a.m., 25 August 1945.

- G: " . . . . which fatally burned 30,000 victims during the first two weeks following its explosion."
- R: Ultra-violet - is that the word?
- G: Yes.
- R: That's kind of crazy.
- G: Of course, it's crazy - a doctor like me can tell that. "The death toll at Hiroshima and at Nagasaki, the other Japanese city blasted atomically, is still rising, the broadcast said. Radio Tokyo described Hiroshima as a city of death. 90% of its houses, in which 250,000 had lived, were instantly crushed." I don't understand the 250,000 because it had a much bigger population a number of years ago before the war started, and it was a military city. "Now it is peopled by ghost parade, the living doomed to die of radioactivity burns."
- R: Let me interrupt you here a minute. I would say this: I think it's good propoganda. The thing is these people got good and burned - good thermal burns.
- G: That's the feeling I have. Let me go on here and give you the rest of the picture. "So painful are these injuries that sufferers plead: 'Please kill me,' the broadcast said. No one can ever completely recover."
- R: This has been in our paper, too, last night.
- G: Then it goes on: "Radioactivity caused by the fission of the uranium used in atomic bombs is taking a toll of mounting deaths and causing reconstruction workers in Hiroshima to suffer various sicknesses and ill health."
- R: I would say this: You yourself, as far as radioactivity is concerned, it isn't anything immediate, it's a prolonged thing. I think what these people have, they just got a good thermal burn, that's what it is. A lot of these people, first of all, they don't notice it much. You may get burned and you may have a little redness, but in a couple of days you may have a big blister or a sloughing of the skin, and I think that is what these people have had.
- G: That is brought out a little later on. Now it says here: "A special news correspondent of the Japs said that three days after the bomb fell, there were 30,000 dead, and two weeks later the death toll had mounted to 60,000 and is continuing to rise." One thing is they are finding the bodies.

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- R: They are getting the delayed action of the burn. For instance, at the Coconut Grove, they didn't all die at once, you know - they were dying for a month afterward.
- G: Now then, he says - this is the thing I wanted to ask you about particularly - "An examination of soldiers working on reconstruction projects one week after the bombing showed that their white corpuscles had diminished by half and a severe deficiency of red corpuscles."
- R: I read that, too - I think there's something hookum about that.
- G: Would they both go down?
- R: They may, yes - they may, but that's awfully quick, pretty terrifically quick. Of course, it depends - - - - - but I wonder if you aren't getting a good dose of propaganda.
- G: Of course, we are getting a good dose of propaganda, due to the idiotic performance of the scientists and another one who is also on the project, and the newspapers and the radio wanting news.
- R: Of course, those Jap scientists over there aren't so dumb either and they are making a play on this, too. They evidently know what the possibility is. Personally, I discounted an awful lot of it, as it's too early, and in the second place, I think that a lot of these deaths they are getting are just delayed thermal burns.
- G: You see what we are faced with. Matthias is having trouble holding his people out there.
- R: Do you want me to get you some real straight dope on this, just how it affects them, and call you back in just a bit?
- G: That's true - that's what I want. Did you also see anything about the Geiger counter? It says that the fact that the uranium had permeated into the ground has been easily ascertained by using a Geiger counter and it has been disclosed that the uranium used in the atomic bomb is harmful to human bodies. Then it talks about this, which is just the thing that we thought -- The majority of injured persons received burns from powerful ultra-violet rays and those within a two-kilometer radius from the center received burns two or three times, which, I suppose, is second or third degree. Those within three to four kilometers received burns to the extent that their skin is burned bright red, but if these burns are caused by ultra-violet, they hardly felt the heat at that time. Later, however, blisters formed resulting in dropsy.
- R: That's why I say it's got to be a thermal burn.
- G: Then they talk about the burned portions of the bodies are infected from the inside.
- R: Well, of course, any burn is potentially an infected wound. We treat any burn as an infected wound. I think you had better get the anti-propagandists out.

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G: We can't, you see, because the whole damage has been done by our own people. There is nothing we can do except sit tight. The reason I am calling you is because we can't get hold of Perry and because I might be asked at any time and I would like to be able to answer. Did you see about the Army men who had received burns on reconstruction? "Examination of 33 servicemen, of whom 10 had received burns in reconstruction projects, one week after the bombing took place, showed those with burns had 3150 white corpuscles and others, who were apparently healthy, had 3800, compared to the ordinary healthy person who has 7,000 to 8,000." This is a drastic decrease. Comes over from Tokyo. On the other hand, servicemen with burns had only 3,000,000 red corpuscles and others apparently healthy had just a little bit more when compared to 4,500,000 to 5,000,000 in the ordinary healthy person." What is that measured by?

R: You go by cubic millimeters. I would say this right off the bat - Anybody with burns, the red count goes down after a while, and the white count may go down, too, just from an ordinary burn. I can't get too excited about that.

G: We are not bothered a bit, excepting for - what they are trying to do is create sympathy. The sad part of it all is that an American started them off.

R: Let me look it up and I'll give you some straight dope on it.

G: This is the kind of thing that hurts us -- "The Japanese, who were reported today by Tokyo radio, to have died mysteriously a few days after the atomic bomb blast, probably were the victims of a phenomenon which is well known in the great radiation laboratories of America." That, of course, is what does us the damage.

R: I would say this: You will have to get some big-wig to put a counter-statement in the paper.