

Preliminary results of physical examinations of thyroid glands in approximately 2,000 school children of Washington County, Utah were announced today jointly by Surgeon General William H. Stewart of the Public Health Service and Dr. G.D.C. Thompson, Director of the Utah State Health Department in Salt Lake City. Results were also given for Graham County, Arizona, where about 1,400 students were examined for "control" or comparison purposes.

The preliminary examinations, made by a team of six physicians organized by the Public Health Service, began September 17, and were completed October 11.

In the opinion of the examining physicians thyroid nodules, or small lumps, may be present in some of approximately 70 of the Washington County students and 25 of the Graham County students.

The next step in the study is for these two groups to be examined by a panel of nationally-known medical authorities on the thyroid gland to determine whether still further tests may be needed by some individuals, and to advise the parents, family physicians, and health officials on each individual situation. Members of the panel are: Dr. Raymond F. Heating, Jr., Mayo Clinic; Dr. Brown M. Dobyns, Cleveland General Hospital; and Dr. Joseph S. Hall, National Institutes of Health.

Among the abnormalities which may be associated with thyroid nodules are non-toxic nodular goiter, inflammatory diseases of the thyroid, and either benign or malignant tumors. The experts will conduct their studies in Washington and Graham Counties in mid-November.

The thyroid study is part of a comprehensive, long-term investigation being conducted jointly by the State Health Departments of Utah and Nevada and the Division of Radiological Health of the Public Health Service, U. S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare.

Beginning in 1959 as an examination of leukemia deaths occurring in Utah and Nevada since 1950, the investigation was expanded in 1963 to include thyroid and bone cancer and congenital malformations. The studies are seeking evidence as to whether the incidence of these defects, which occur naturally, may have been increased by radiation exposures received from operations carried out at the Nevada Test Site during the 1950s.