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COMMITTEE ON ATOMIC ENERGY
Washington 25, D.C.

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JOINT PANEL ON MEDICAL ASPECTS OF ATOMIC WARFARE

Minutes of Seventh Meeting
Held on 25-26 January 1951
The University of Rochester School of Medicine
Rochester, New York

MEMBERS AND DEPUTIES PRESENT:

- Dr. Joseph C. Aub, Chairman
- Dr. Franklin C. McLean
- Dr. Robley D. Evans
- Dr. Robert R. Newell
- Dr. Louis H. Hempelmann
- Brig.Gen. Elbert DeCoursey, USA
- Lt. Col. Frank L. Bauer, MC, USA
- Maj. Gerald M. McDonnel, MC, USA
- Capt. C. F. Behrens, MC, USN
- Capt. V. C. Tipton, MC, USN
- Dr. Sidney R. Galler, ONR
- Dr. M. C. Fishler, NRDL
- Lt. Col. John M. Talbot, USAF (MC)
- Col. Robert H. Blount, USAF (MC)

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ASSOCIATE MEMBERS PRESENT:

- Mr. Allen M. Pond, USPHS
- Lt. Col. Wm. J. Brown, MC, USA, Log.Div., GS USA
- Dr. H. E. Pearse, Panel on Thermal Radiation, AFSWP

SECRETARIAT:

- Dr. Joseph M. Pisani
- Dr. Thomas B. Spencer
- Dr. Harry C. Ehrmantraut
- Lt. Col. Hal Bridges, MC, USA
- Cdr. Joseph P. Pollard, MC, USN
- Lt. Col. Charles E. Melcher, USAF (MC)

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OTHERS:

Dr. Wallace O. Fenn, Comte on Medical Sciences
Dr. Paul Beall, RDB
Mr. David Z. Beckler, Comte on Atomic Energy
Mr. F. H. Quimby, QNR
Dr. L. W. Tuttle, AEC

1. Minutes of the Sixth Meeting.

After a discussion of the implementation of the Minutes, including recommendations of the group concerning the catastrophe team project now being formulated,

The Panel:

Approved the Minutes of the Sixth Meeting.

2. Technical Estimates, 1951.

After reviewing the pertinent documents,

The Panel:

Prepared its Technical Estimates for 1951, BAW 13/4, Log No. 38684, appended hereto as Attachment A.

3. Resume Reports on Research Progress in Technical Areas.

A. Dr. McLean reported on the handling of catastrophes in the discussion of the catastrophe team project.

B. Lt. Col. Talbot reported on problems important to aviation.

C. Other reports were deferred until a future meeting.

4. Effects of Ionizing Radiation on Primates.

In the absence of Dr. Andrews, Mr. Pond reported on the status of this project for the Panel's information. The Minutes of the meeting of an Ad Hoc Panel (NIH) which considered this project and made pertinent recommendations to the National Advisory Cancer Committee

are appended as Attachment B for Panel Members only. No action has been taken on these recommendations, and they are appended only for informational purposes.

5. Human Experimentation.

General James P. Cooney was unable to attend the Panel meeting but indicated that the following should be entered into the Minutes of the meeting:

At a meeting of the Advisory Group to the Division of Biology and Medicine of the Atomic Energy Commission which occurred shortly after the Sixth Panel Meeting (31 Oct-1 Nov 1950), the three Services were represented by Admiral Greaves, General Powell and General Cooney, who were queried concerning any problems that they might have for the Advisory Panel to consider. General Cooney addressed Dr. Alan Gregg, the Chairman of the Advisory Committee by indicating that the military had a definite problem because of the fact that the atomic bomb might possibly be used as a tactical weapon. Under such conditions it is reasonable to assume that a large force might be subjected to aerial bombardment and a relatively short time later the commanding officer would confront his Medical Officer with the following: "I have 'X' thousands of men who have been subjected to various amounts of ionizing radiation from 25 to 150 r or more. How many men can I take into battle? How many will be sick? When will they be sick? How many replacements shall I request and when shall I ask for them?" Up to the present time the military has expressed opinions concerning answers to the above but there has been no official backing by any

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authoritative medical group. Many individuals feel that we have sufficient data on humans to give these answers. Others feel we do not and therefore some human experimentation should be done on military volunteers to whom the effects of ionizing radiation have been explained in detail.

Military medicine has the responsibility of maintaining high medical standards which the American Medical Association and other allied groups insist upon. If American medicine were satisfied with the data on the effect of ionizing radiation on humans, then military medicine would also be satisfied. If such information is not available, then it was requested that procedures be outlined to obtain same.

The Advisory Panel then had a long discussion on the problem of human experimentation and it was the consensus of this group that human experimentation was probably not the answer at this time due to the fact that in order to obtain statistically significant results several thousand people would have to be exposed to ionizing radiation. Dr. Shields Warren expressed his opinion that sufficient data was already at hand. Dr. Gregg then asked the representatives of the Services whether or not they would like to have him convene a panel of men who have had a large amount of experience in this field as members. The representatives from the Services welcomed this suggestion and as a result a meeting was held on 8 December 1950 in Washington.

(The results of this meeting are contained in the letter, appended as Attachment C, BAW 10/3, which was distributed at the Panel. The subject letter was addressed to Mr. Robert LeBaron, Chairman of the Military Liaison Committee by Mr. Boyer of the Atomic Energy Commission. The Military Liaison Committee disseminated this letter to the Chief of Staff of the Army, the Chief of Staff of the Air Force and the Chief of Naval Operations, who in turn have disseminated this information widely to the individual Services.)

These opinions, since they are based upon impressions rather than experimental data, do not negate the necessity for human experimentation at some future date. It is felt, however, that the acute need for this human experimentation has been somewhat relieved and therefore diligent efforts for the establishment of this program may be temporarily curtailed. Implications and impression never replace facts.

6. Report on Ventilation Systems of Airplanes.

Radiation Hazards in Air Force Operations

In connection with the question of fission product contamination of the cabin atmosphere and surfaces of aircraft flying through a radioactively contaminated atmosphere, calculations suggest that the inhalation hazard for crew members in anticipated AW situations is negligible but that the likelihood of extremely serious external gamma ray exposures is a real one. Col. Blount requested the Panel opinion on the need for filtering cabin pressurizing and ventilating.

air during flight through contaminated air.

The Panel:

Approved a motion:

- A. THAT based upon information currently available, the external radiation hazard far outweighs the internal radiation hazard.
- B. THAT closing of air ventilation intake or pressure air would be as effective as an air filter in protecting the individual air crewman in traversing radioactive clouds.
- C. THAT personal protective equipment, such as a closed oxygen system or protective filter for present oxygen mask, is probably the most effective method of protection against inhalation or ingestion of radioactive particulates.
- D. THAT evaluation of whether or not the aircraft pressurizing and ventilating system requires a protective filter should be postponed until better atomic weapons test data become available.

7. Military Characteristics of Radiac Equipment.

The Panel:

Approved the following motion:

THAT the Panel concurs with the specifications as supplied by the Joint Chiefs of Staff, concerning the military characteristics for the individual dosimeter and portable radiac survey type instruments.

8. Other Business.

After discussion,

The Panel:

A.. Approved the motion:

THAT consideration be given for the inclusion of necessary biomedical investigation in all future atomic weapons tests which lend themselves to biomedical research.

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B. Toured the AEC facilities at the University of Rochester on January 25, heard reports on projects which concern the field of interest of the Panel, and approved a motion:

TO extend thanks to the local members of the Panel and to the AEC Project staff members for their hospitality.

C. In response to a request for Panel opinion by Dr. J. Howland, of the Rochester AEC installation, on a project for determining the effects of blood transfusion and antibiotics on radiation illness, approved the following motion:

THAT the Panel concurs in Dr. Howland's plan to obtain results on blood alone, antibiotics alone, and both together; these experiments to be run concurrently.

D. Dr. Beall reported on the dissemination of information within the RDB.

E. Dr. McLean reported on the status of the Noyes Panel on Radiological Warfare.

F. Appended as Attachment D, BAW 11/5, for the Panel's information, an AEC memorandum of record, prepared by Dr. William F. Bale of the Division of Biology and Medicine, giving revised figures on the levels of radioactivity in water and food that can be permitted under emergency conditions.

9. Date of Next Meeting.

The Panel:

Adjourned sine die.

Joseph M. Pisani
JOSEPH M. PISANI, M.D.
Executive Director
Committee on Medical Sciences

- Attachments: (A) BAW 13/4, Log No. 38684 (Circulated separately)
- (B) Summary of the Ad Hoc Planning Comte for Study of Ionizing Radiation on Primates (for Panel Members only)
- (C) BAW 10/3
- (D) BAW 11/5

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