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*July 6, 1961*

Dear Dr. Seaborg:

At its 87th meeting held in Washington on June 9 and 10, the Advisory Committee for Biology and Medicine was briefed by Dr. Douglas Grahn, of the Division of Biology and Medicine, AEC, and Dr. G. Dale Smith, of the National Aeronautics and Space Administration's Office of Life Sciences, on the cooperative program now being conducted to investigate radiation effects on living cells and organisms subjected to flights in space. It seems to us most encouraging that joint attention is now being given to the quantitative evaluation of the various radiation hazards to be faced in the Van Allen belts, outer space, and regions of lower altitude. Full and adequate attention must be given to these problems before lunar and planetary landings can be considered feasible. We were pleased to note the very close cooperation between AEC and NASA at the staff level in Washington and in the field.

The Committee again considered the relative benefits of contracts and of grants for basic research. Having heard the results of further exploration of the administration of research contracts, we are convinced that the current administrative practices are satisfactory and that the proposed separation of grants and contracts seems to be unnecessary. However, the Committee strongly recommends that contracts be negotiated for longer periods of three or more years, and that ample notice be given either when contracts are to be terminated or negotiated for renewal.

We were pleased to note the strengthening of the Nuclear Safety Research Program, as reported to us by Dr. J. Lieberman. This development will be helpful to the Division of Biology and Medicine in planning its future research program.

We have further considered the recommendations of the Radiobotany Committee for an enlarged program in the plant sciences, and we urge that this work be supplemented and strengthened. To that end, we recommend that the Division of Biology and Medicine appoint an ad hoc committee to advise it regarding the feasibility of establishing special projects in radiation botany in one or more universities or other off-site scientific institutions.

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As indicated in our letter of June 6 to you, we were very favorably impressed, on the occasion of our recent visit to the Oak Ridge National Laboratory, with the quality of the research program of the permanent staff of the Biology Division, and its excellent record in postdoctoral training and research. It seems clear that the presence of postdoctoral workers in the laboratory contributes markedly to the stimulation, optimum research productivity, and morale of senior staff members. Such opportunities for the training of research workers should be utilized optimally. Hence we favor a reasonable enlargement of this program of the Biology Division, ORNL, and we recommend that the AEC take steps, including the provision of the necessary additional funds, to make this possible.

We were most interested in learning of the current reorganization in the Office of Civil and Defense Mobilization. It seems to us that, in spite of much past attention to civil defense on the part of the ACBM, there is still insufficient study of the long-range effects of nuclear wars (of different magnitudes) throughout the period subsequent to emergence from civil defense shelters. We are planning to devote a major part of one of our meetings this coming fall to a fuller consideration of civil defense problems.

We devoted some time to a further consideration of Project Chariot, as reported to us by Dr. J. N. Wolfe, DBM, and Mr. J. S. Kelly, DMA. We are pleased that steps are being taken to resolve the problems raised in regard to hydrography. We are very cognizant of the public attacks recently made on the Chariot Program. For our part, we believe that the environmental studies have been conducted with scientific skill, care, and thoroughness, and we expressly want them carried to completion.

The ACBM sincerely regretted that Commissioner Haworth was not able to carry out his intention to be present at our meeting. We appreciate the courtesy of his note, and also of yours, and we look forward to seeing any of the members of the Commission at our meetings whenever you are able to be present.

Sincerely yours,

H. Bentley Glass, Acting Chairman  
 John C. Bugher, Chairman  
 Fred J. Hodges  
 James G. Horsfall  
 Robert F. Loeb  
 Leonidas D. Marinelli  
 James H. Sterner  
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