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December 14, 1966

Dear Dr. Seaborg:

We are pleased to report that the 115th meeting of the Advisory Committee for Biology and Medicine took place in Oak Ridge on November 10-12, 1966. Arrangements were made to spend November 10 at the UT-AEC Agricultural Research Laboratory and November 11 at the Medical Division of Oak Ridge Institute of Nuclear Studies, ORAU. Scientific presentations by the staffs, and discussions at the end of each day with senior members of the groups, provided the ACBM with some valuable insights into the present and proposed programs.

While the UT-AEC ARL facility provides a rather unique opportunity for long range studies with large animals, the Committee feels that full advantage has not been taken of this. Because of serious deficiencies in experimental design, dosimetry and instrumentation, the ACBM doubts that the goals sought will be realized if the program continues in its present form. In order to realize these important goals, a technically more sophisticated and better designed research program is needed.

The program of the Medical Division, ORINS, is directed mainly to effects of total body irradiation in man and to medical applications of radio-isotopes. The unique aspect of the program relates to an evaluation of low level radiation effects in man, an activity which is of interest to National Aeronautics and Space Administration as well as to the AEC. The basic problems involved in sustaining a clinical research facility in this medically isolated environment have not been overcome and, partly because of this, only limited progress has been made.

The ACBM met on November 12 with Dr. Dunham, members of his staff, and Commissioner Nabrit. In discussion of this program at UT-AEC ARL and the Medical Division of ORINS, there was general agreement that neither of these organizations has effectively used the staff competence of Oak Ridge National Laboratory in the planning and conduct of their respective programs, and thus they have failed to take advantage of a unique opportunity. The ACBM recommends that DBM seek means to develop a more meaningful and effective arrangement for interchange of information and mutual scientific review of the research programs and plans among the three organizations, UT-AEC ARL, ORINS, and ORNL. Review in depth of the scientific merit of holding the several miscellaneous groups of surviving large animals which were subjected to a variety of radiations should be instituted as promptly as possible.

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Dr. Totter reported on the Developmental Biology Conference arranged by DBM to help assess the role of DBM in furthering support of this rapidly emerging area of biology which must be further developed if we are to have a meaningful understanding of radiation effects. ACBM recommended enthusiastically that DBM develop and seek substantial expansion of financial support for this important area of biology.

Dr. Dunham reported on matters related to the present and future budgets and other matters of interest to ACBM, and briefly on some impressions of his recent trip to USSR. Dr. Bruner reported on his recent trip to Korea. Dr. Edington reported on the present status of the investigations under way concerned with the assessment of toxicity of irradiated sucrose solutions.

After departure from the meeting of Dr. Dunham and his staff, the ACBM went into executive session with Commissioner Nabrit in attendance.

The members of ACBM were pleased to learn from Commissioner Nabrit of the Commission's interest in and his personal plans for more frequent communication and meetings with the ACBM. Commissioner Nabrit's attendance and participation in the discussion of this meeting were considered by the members of ACBM to have been most valuable to them and they look forward to further meetings with Commissioner Nabrit and other members of the Commission.

The next meeting of the Committee will be held at AEC Headquarters on January 13-14, 1967.

Sincerely yours,

Philip P. Cohen, M.D.  
Vice-Chairman, Advisory Committee  
for Biology and Medicine

Dr. Glenn T. Seaborg  
Chairman  
U. S. Atomic Energy Commission  
Washington, D. C. 20545

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