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MINUTES

125th MEETING

ADVISORY COMMITTEE FOR BIOLOGY AND MEDICINE
U. S. ATOMIC ENERGY COMMISSION

(Joint ACBM-GAC Meeting)

Argonne National Laboratory
Argonne, Illinois
July 8, 1968

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The 125th Meeting of the AEC Advisory Committee for Biology and Medicine was held at Argonne National Laboratory on July 8, 1968. Committee members present were Drs. Green (Chairman), Cohen (Vice-Chairman), Bale, Haagen-Smit, McGee, Moseley, Russell, Patt (Scientific Secretary) and Rosemary Elmo (Executive Secretary). Also in attendance were Drs. English, Totter, and various members of the staff of the AEC Division of Biology and Medicine. (Drs. Storer and Lough; Messrs. Deal and Stanwood).

The morning session was concerned with a series of briefings in regard to the afternoon meeting with the General Advisory Committee. The ACBM also discussed a possible replacement for Dr. James Wyngaarden. Drs. Valentine, Stead, and Smith were recommended to Dr. Totter. The Committee also approved the minutes of the 124th meeting as circulated.

Dr. Lough noted that the NAS-NRC has constituted an ad hoc Committee to review the HEW epidemiological studies of uranium mines. There is an increased incidence of lung cancer above 400 "working level" months but it is still questionable whether there is an effect at lower levels. Although the Department of Labor has indicated that the permissible level is to be reduced from 1 to 0.3 working level per month on January 1, 1969, the appropriateness of this reduction is open to question. The ACBM believes that a careful prospective study is needed to establish a proper working level.

Dr. Totter indicated that Robley Evans concurred with the ACBM Subcommittee Report on a Center for Human Radiobiology and the plan for centralization of relevant activities under Robert Rowland at Argonne. The possibility of bringing together all Argonne groups working on problems of radioelement toxicity will be discussed with Dr. Duffield. Dr. Totter also noted that "Human Radiobiology" was an inappropriate title for these activities and that this was recognized by the Commission.

Mr. Deal reviewed the plans for underground testing at Amchitka and referred to possible problems in connection with its status as a wild life refuge. He also briefed the Committee on the views of various groups in regard to Civil Defense.

The GAC-ACBM joint session was oriented to several topics, each being introduced by an AEC staff members.

1. Uranium miner exposure problem. The discussion was focused on the question of the appropriateness of the proposed permissible dose of 0.3 working level of radiation per month. It was the consensus of the ACBM that the present information does not provide a clear indication of a relationship between lung cancer incidence and doses below 400 working level months. The desirability of a prospective study was conveyed to the GAC.

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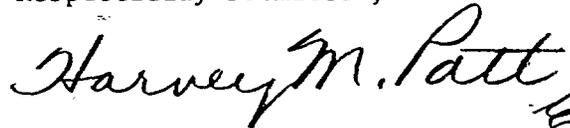
2. Establishment of a Center of Human Radiobiology. The previous ACBM review of this matter was presented as an informational item.

3. Maximum acceptable radiation exposure relative to reactor siting. The GAC raised the question of the maximum acceptable dose to a population in the immediate vicinity of a reactor. The present standard, which is used in design criteria, is 25 rem to the general population in the event of a reactor accident. There was some discussion of the necessity of a specified dose for reactor siting. Although the 25 rem dose was apparently taken out of context from an NCRP report, it is probably a reasonable value as a maximum dose for a single emergency exposure. However, a definite position on this was not taken by the Committee.

Other topics which were presented as information items were:

1) AEC Civil Effects Program (Deal); 2) Proposed Energy Center Concept for power, water, and chemical production (Williams, RDT); and 3) Possible effects of underground weapon testing on natural resources at Amchitka (Facer, DMA).

Respectfully submitted,



Harvey M. Patt, Scientific Secretary
Advisory Committee for Biology and
and Medicine

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