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May 13, 1970

Dr. Glenn T. Seaborg, ~~President~~
United States Atomic Energy Commission
Washington, D. C. 20545

In re: 134th Meeting, Advisory Committee for Biology and Medicine

Dear Dr. Seaborg:

The Advisory Committee for Biology and Medicine held its 134th meeting at the Battelle-Northwest Laboratory, Richland, Washington, on Thursday and Friday, May 7-8, 1970. Present for the entire meeting were Dr. Robert D. Moseley, Jr., Vice-Chairman, and Doctors William F. Bale, Arië J. Haagen-Smit, and Perry R. Stout, members of the Advisory Committee. Dr. Philip P. Cohen, the Chairman of the Advisory Committee, was present for a portion of the first morning of the Committee's meeting with the Battelle-Northwest Laboratory staff but was recalled to the University of Wisconsin by the Chancellor due to campus disturbances there. Dr. Clement A. Finch, Professor in the Department of Hematology at the University of Washington, Seattle, Washington, who will become a member of the Advisory Committee in July 1970, attended the meeting as a guest of the Committee.

The program, organized by Dr. Edward L. Alpen, Manager of the Environmental and Life Sciences Division of the Battelle-Northwest Laboratory, involved reports on The Atmospheric Resources Department Programs, The Radiological Sciences Department Programs, The Ecosystems Department Program, and The Biology Department Programs carried out at the Battelle Northwest Laboratory under Atomic Energy Commission sponsorship. These areas are, of course, of continuing and intense interest to the ACBM. In particular, the ACBM was pleased to hear of the progress made in new techniques and sensitive instrumentation for use in medical research and health physics. Thermal stress problems, chronic ⁹⁰Sr toxicity and inhaled plutonium toxicity, and studies concerning co-carcinogenicity of uranium mine air contaminants. In addition to the laboratory personnel, the ACBM heard a presentation by Dr. Robert A. Conard of Brookhaven National Laboratory on medical findings in the people of the Marshall Islands accidentally exposed to fallout.

At its executive session, the ACBM agreed to recommend that consideration be given to the development of some mechanism for payment to the Utiarik population as research subjects in a way to assure their continued cooperation with the investigation of the Marshallese people accidentally exposed to radioactive fallout in 1954. It is clear that the mechanism for payment would have to avoid the connotation that this was in compensation for radiation exposure, in view of the low dose of radiation received by Utiarik population. In addition, the ACBM recognizes the necessity for the continued medical care of the Rongelap popu-

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Dr. Glenn T. Seaborg
Washington, D. C. 20545

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lation, probably by the assignment of a paramedical person on a continuing basis, both to insure that the late effects of these accidental exposures are adequately detected and managed, as well as to insure the validity of the continuing investigation of the medical findings in this group.

The ACBM also recommends that the Commission investigate mechanisms of stimulating the creation of a monograph on natural radiation backgrounds, possibly under the aegis of the NAS-NRC and/or NCRP. In view of the concern being expressed by members of the scientific community concerning the relevancy of present radiation protection standards, it is felt an in-depth investigation of the quantity and quality of unavoidable natural radiation would be of great assistance in putting these problems in proper perspective.

Very truly yours,

RDM/kmp

ROBERT D. MOSELEY, Jr., M. D.
Vice-Chairman
Advisory Committee for Biology and Medicine

(Dictated by Dr. Moseley; mailed in his absence.)

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