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October 31, 1949

Mr. David M. Lilienthal, Chairman  
U. S. Atomic Energy Commission  
1901 Constitution Avenue N. W.  
Washington 25, D. C.

Dear Mr. Lilienthal:

A special meeting of the Advisory Committee for Biology and Medicine was held on Thursday, October 20, 1949, at which the main considerations were Civil Defense Planning and the program of the Atomic Bomb Casualty Commission. All of the members of the Committee were present with the exception of its Chairman, Dr. Alan Gregg.

We were informed of recent developments in Civil Defense Planning and of the Commission's approval of the program submitted by the Division of Biology and Medicine. We are concerned as to the lack of definition of responsibility within the government and recognize the need for further consideration of the problem. It is apparent that the National Security Resources Board is directing its major attention to manpower mobilization, critical supplies and other problems of resources.

I have appointed a subcommittee consisting of Dr. Joseph T. Wearu, Chairman, Dr. Detlev W. Bronk and Dr. E. C. Stakman and have asked them to prepare a statement concerning the biological, medical and health physics problems which appropriately are the Commission's responsibility in Civil Defense.

You will recall that at our meeting on September 1949, Dr. Bowers reported on his visit to the Atomic Bomb Casualty Commission in Japan. This report, as well as material subsequently furnished by the National Research Council, have raised several questions in our minds. We wonder if there is not too much emphasis on research and too little attention to screening the survivors for sequelae of the explosions. In view of the research advances that have been made since the initiation of the program, perhaps there is need for re-orientation. Also two years have elapsed in which relatively little information has

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been gained. Accordingly.--

"The Advisory Committee for Biology and Medicine urgently recommends that the National Research Council be requested to appraise the present status of the Atomic Bomb Casualty Commission program, appraise the prospective value of future work, to recommend such modifications as may be desirable in view of changed conditions since the start of the program, and to recommend a time schedule for the program in order that the Atomic Energy Commission may discharge its responsibilities in this area."

In view of the above recommendation it was the sense of the Committee that it was desirable to continue in abeyance construction at Kure pending a report from the National Research Council on the program.

The Committee considered the problem relating to the clearance of personnel engaged on unclassified research contracts. They recognized the unique public and congressional relations problems faced by the Atomic Energy Commission in its activities in unclassified areas and they agreed that the Commission was right in principle in its reluctance to see clearance and investigations procedures extended to individuals working in unclassified fields. They were concerned with the delineation of secret and non-secret data and were of the opinion that fundamental research in the fields of biology and medicine related to atomic energy must be free from restraints.

It is our understanding that the Director of the Division of Biology and Medicine is preparing a staff paper which reflects some of the views of the Committee for submission to the Commission on the above subjects.

The next meeting of the Advisory Committee for Biology and Medicine will be held at Oak Ridge Operations Office on November 11 and 12, 1949.

Sincerely yours,

Ernest W. Goodpasture, M.D.  
Vice-Chairman, Advisory Committee  
for Biology and Medicine

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