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Dear Mr. Strauss:

The Advisory Committee for Biology and Medicine held its 61th meeting in Washington on September 13 and 14. The Committee was particularly gratified that Mr. Fields was able to take time out from his busy schedule to attend the morning session on September 13th and that Commissioner Graham was able to be present for practically the entire meeting. This expression of interest by the General Manager and by Commissioner Graham in its deliberations meant a great deal to the Committee and was, of course, especially gratifying to the staff of the Division of Biology and Medicine.

The following statement was prepared by the Committee in executive session as an expression of its considered opinion concerning the planned expansion of the program of the Division of Biology and Medicine, giving particular emphasis to the biomedical problems created by radioactive fallout from nuclear weapons tests:

"The Advisory Committee for Biology and Medicine, mindful of the responsibilities of the Atomic Energy Commission and of the widespread public concern with atomic hazards, particularly fallout, as expressed through the recent hearings before the JCAE, the creation of the United Nations Scientific Committee on the Effects of Atomic Radiation and similar groups in other countries, and aware of the growing need for biomedical knowledge applicable to foreseeable power applications of atomic energy, has reviewed the total program of the Division of Biology and Medicine. The Committee recognizes that AEC must make both a basic approach to the peaceful biomedical applications of atomic energy and at the same time extend its program to answer the urgent questions of today and the immediate future. The program in the base budget and its proposed expansion have been analyzed as to content and reviewed as to performance to date.

The Committee wishes to call to the attention of the AEC that each significant advance in the atomic energy program has made fresh demands upon the Division without relieving it of previous responsibilities. Furthermore, more detailed answers to increasingly complex problems are demanded. Research plans anticipating these problems in the earlier days of the Commission could never receive the extent of financial support or manpower necessary to obtain definitive and adequately detailed answers.

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Particularly has this been true of Biology and Medicine, although we recognize that all Divisions are similarly affected. This has not come about through failure of support either from the Commission or from the Congress.

The ACBM believes that the various programs should be expanded as planned, *and* finds the dollar amounts realistic and considers adequate manpower to be available. However, it feels the planned construction program to be inadequate and foresees long delays in obtaining important data if this is not augmented.

Both national laboratories and universities are faced with increasing space demands. The universities will be forced to cut into research space by sheer pressure of increasing student populations. Time has not been available for detailed consideration of individual projects. In general, administrative practices in review of productivity of research and control of budget appear adequate, particularly in consideration of the Division's limited staff. Travel is an important method by which the limited staff has guided a complex program. The Committee feels this to be essential. However, this requires both adequate travel funds and personnel.

We recommend that the Division continue its scrutiny particularly of the older and continuing types of research projects to assure adequate return and appropriate pertinence to the AEC's mission. Cooperative programs with other agencies and Divisions as with the NSF on education, the NSF on environmental hygiene, the Department of Agriculture on the uptake of radioactive material by plants, and the Division of Reactor Development on waste disposal, are of mutual benefit to the scientists involved and provide significant savings for the taxpayers.

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There are no obvious omissions in the program, but there are some categories which had been undertaken because of the urgent need and because no other group was prepared to support them. Among these are certain phases of oceanography, of geophysics, and of blast studies. It is hoped that the Commission may be able to transfer these important but somewhat extraneous activities to more appropriate agencies in order that the DEM may concentrate on the areas of its primary responsibilities."

Sincerely yours,

Shields Warren

Shields Warren, M.D.
Vice-Chairman, Advisory Committee for
Biology and Medicine

Mr. L. L. Strauss, Chairman

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