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Lawrence Berkeley Laboratory	
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Records Series Title	<i>LBL Life Sciences Division</i>
	<i>R &amp; D Administrative Files</i>
Accession No.	<i>434-90-0236</i>
File Code No.	<i>13-11-26</i>
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Folder No.	<i>Fabric Box</i>
Notes	
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San Francisco: Medical School  
University Hospital

February 28, 1947

President Robert G. Sproul  
University of California  
Berkeley 4, California

Dear President Sproul:

This refers to your letter of January 27, 1947, concerning the work of the Donner Laboratory.

Your quotation from the "preliminary report" of the committee appointed to study administrative organization of Medical Physics is entirely correct. However, it cannot be taken out of its context. It was the intent of that committee, as stated in their report, that the administrative organization should be such that the group working Medical Physics would be responsible through the Medical School for all matters pertaining to human application of physical developments.

The subdivision of Medical Physics was set up without any definition from you as to where the field traditionally assigned to the Medical School and that assigned to Physics should meet. Neither I nor anyone else in the Medical School has been informed as to what control we have over members of the staff of the subdivision of Medical Physics. Even though they have appointments in the Medical School, can they take action regarding matters involving human application without consulting the head of their own Medical School division or myself - doing so on the basis of their Medical Physics appointments?

The intent of the committee is clear from their report, namely that all human work must be under control of the Medical School. They allowed for two kinds of studies being done in Berkeley on humans, these like neutron therapy where the patient and apparatus had to come together, and certain tracer studies that might have to be initiated in Berkeley and then shifted to San Francisco "as soon as possible". The idea behind the latter group was that techniques and apparatus might have to be worked out with the physicists.

Might I point out that Dr. John Lawrence in his "note to be attached to preliminary report of committee etc.", stated that "the small clinic in Berkeley could be considered as a Medical Physics branch of the out-patient department of the Hospital etc.". He has never approached Dr. W. E. Carter, the Director of our Outpatient Department, for authority to operate or as to coordinating records in any way whatever.

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President Sproul

February 28, 1947

Page 2.

The treatment clinic with radio-phosphorus is still being carried on in Berkeley, even though this could very well have been transferred years ago.

The problem is one of lack of clarity of responsibility. I have never been informed as to what control I have over medical activities of the members of the Medical Physics subdivision, and they apparently feel that they can go their own way without consulting their immediate superiors in the Medical School or myself.

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May I point out that to develop facilities in Berkeley for handling patients, would constitute essentially a "third" medical center, a very expensive procedure. The separation of such work is a loss to the Medical School, and the absence of the Medical School is a loss to it. To practice medicine of a true university grade, something the university can be proud of, requires the cooperation of a large group of specialists, and the supervision of department heads who have reached the age of judgment. This is all lacking in the small "clinic" such as that conducted in the Crocker Laboratory, and will be lacking in any expansion or widening of activities. Thus, we lose the stimulation of their activities and the use of expensive equipment, and they lose the contacts with the various specialists here and the more mature judgment of the department heads.

The present review of the situation is occasioned, as you may know, by the plans which Doctor John Lawrence developed for human application to be carried on in Berkeley, and which were publicized before anyone in the Medical School was informed. In our recommendation in 1944, it was our sober advice that such work should obviously have the protection and facilities of the University of California Hospital, to which purpose the hospital is dedicated. It would seem to me most seriously open to question if metabolic or hematological studies on human beings should require facilities in Berkeley. I believe such plans are unsound and potentially dangerous, unless the University is prepared to meet the duplication and high cost of a hospital for purely experimentation similar to the Rockefeller

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President Sproul

February 28, 1947

Page 3.

Hospital. Even then, at a time when we are attempting to unify the Medical School, it seems inadvisable to set up a new unit that should obviously be part of the Medical School.

Would you, therefore, clarify my position in this matter? Would you like to reactivate the former committee to study the situation, or will you act on the report of the 1944 committee (that was never put in as a final, formal report)? The supply of radio-active materials now coming from Oak Ridge and the need for close physical connection with the Radiation Laboratory having diminished, I wonder whether the University would not profit more by expansion of the Donner Laboratory type of research on the San Francisco campus in closer collaboration with the Medical School?

Sincerely yours,

S/G Francis Scott Smyth, M.D.  
Francis Scott Smyth, M.D.  
Dean

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*copy for Dr. John H. Lawrence*

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