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TO : Files

DATE: June 8, 1959

FROM : C. D. Van Nieuve, Medical Research Branch
Division of Biology and Medicine

720129

SUBJECT: GROUP VISIT MAY 25 - 26, 1959, TO RADIOBIOLOGICAL LABORATORY AND THE
BALCONES RESEARCH CENTER, AUSTIN, TEXAS AND THE DEPARTMENT OF
RADIOBIOLOGY, RANDOLPH AFB, TEXAS

SYMBOL: BMM:CDVC

Two impressions of this trip stand out in retrospect: (1) the nice scheduling of presentations and of the arrangements, in general, for the visit which struck me as models of efficiency and practiced ease; and (2) the large areas of duplication of research effort in our program and the Air Force's. This was most evident in the material presented at Austin. The opportunity of working with primates in such numbers may, however, be sufficient justification for repeating work done earlier and elsewhere on mice and rats.

I hope Melville's work on the protective action of chemicals, either alone or combined with bone marrow, is familiar to Overman at Memphis, who is doing the same thing to individual monkeys instead of groups. As a whole, the Austin program impressed me as lacking in originality, although this may be an inherent disadvantage of the two year personnel rotation, as well as the necessary emphasis on chronic, long term effects. I thought Brown's program on behavioral effects, by far, the most interesting work at Austin.

The review of AF supported off-site contracts given at Randolph was informative. It was healthy to hear Gerstner repeat his conviction that the nervous system is highly radioresistant, that the synapse is probably not a sensitive area, but that he hadn't yet made up his mind about the autonomies. His emphasis on direct action of radiation on chemical mediators circulating in the blood stream is always worth remembering. I had not heard before that human whole-body irradiation studies at the 150 - 200 r level were being done at Galveston. He told me privately he thought the clinical assessment of these cases left something to be desired.

Brown told about Dowdy's AF research at UCLA and Upton's contract at ORNL. Ralph Allen described a contract with Pollard at Yale to study effect on tissues of heavy ions accelerated by the Yale Hilac. He was uncertain exactly what was being irradiated but was sure it was not CNS. I think if Pollard can make the Yale Hilac available for biological work for the AF, he could also accommodate Haymaker and Herman Chase who travel to Berkeley to use the duplicate Hilac

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Although I have mentioned only a few items of particular interest to me, I thought the whole visit very informative and worthwhile.

cc: Dr. Shilling

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