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12 Dec. 19

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Lee E. Farr, M. D. *Lee E. Farr.*

Program of medical

Attached is a statement of the program of the medical department as given to the Director on 7 December 1949. This has received his unofficial approval, and was previously approved by Dr. Donald D. Van Slyke.

It is suggested that when discussing the program of the medical department you adhere in general to the program as herein outlined.

Medical Department

LEF:DK

Encl

Cc Dr. Van Slyke

Dr. Madden

Dr. Hale

Dr. Love

J. Locke

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Sound development of a program of medical research by the Brookhaven National Laboratory requires a clear exposition of the aims and objectives of such a project. Before stating the goal of Brookhaven National Laboratory Medical Department it should be made clear that the project at Brookhaven is not an isolated undertaking, but is being coordinated with work in progress in the various universities and medical institutions of the northeast area. Thereby unnecessary duplication is avoided and greater opportunities are provided for mutual efforts. The aim of medical research at Brookhaven is fourfold:

First, to develop a creative undertaking which will broaden, enhance and profit medicine in all its scientific aspects;

Second, to apply the special materials and technics available to the Brookhaven staff to the elucidation of problems of disease, to the elucidation of the factors which constitute a state of health, and to the defining of the scope and usefulness of radioactive materials in the specific therapy of certain disease states;

Third, to educate young medical men and fully qualified senior medical men with the necessary nuclear science background and to acquaint them with specific procedures using various radioactive materials so that they may advantageously use these substances in the attack they are prosecuting on their own problems either at Brookhaven or their own universities;

Fourth, to work vigorously for a better understanding of the physiological effects of various types of radiation, to determine when such may be used diagnostically or therapeutically, and also to achieve better control of the hazards of radiation both in peacetime and wartime.

To implement this fourfold program there has been provided a small hospital providing 30 to 35 beds to serve the needs of medical research at Brookhaven, together with supporting medical science laboratories wherein can be carried out pertinent observations on both inert and living systems.

In the selection of the staff to use these facilities and to prosecute medical research, every endeavor is being made to procure a group which will be one of the strongest medical faculties of its kind in the country. Each division of the three at present activated - namely, biochemistry, bacteriology and virology, and pathology - is headed by an outstanding investigator. It is hoped the head of the fourth division - namely, physiology - will have been selected by the time this report goes to press. These four divisions man the supporting laboratories for the hospital, and together with the division of industrial medicine comprise the scientific personnel administrative units of the department.

In the hospital, patients are being observed to determine the usefulness of certain radioactive materials in the control of cancer, in the control of hyperthyroidism, and in determining the site of the primary disorder in nephrosis, a peculiarly distressing and extremely serious illness of young children.

In addition, and among other projects beginning, are studies on the effects of excretion of radioactive elements on certain specific functions of the kidney; the response of various body tissues to injury by radiation; and the interrelationship of host cell to virus particle and the effects of various types of radiation on this relationship. The specific fields of investigation being developed are selected both with regard to the prominence of the disease states in mortality and morbidity statistics and with regard to the accessibility of the problems to available methods of attack.

Some of the projects involve fundamental studies of physiological and pathological processes. It may be necessary to pursue such projects several years before results can be properly evaluated.

Dec. 7, 1949

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