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THE MEDICAL SCHOOL
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303 E. CHICAGO AVE.

October 27, 1953

Mr. Ernest Allen
Division of Research Grants
National Institutes of Public Health
Bethesda, Maryland

Dear Mr. Allen:

Since the proposal for the Chronic Primate Program (which, as you know, ~~was~~ passed unanimously through our committee) contained little background on the thinking rationale behind the various aspects of it, I thought you might welcome some additional information on this matter.

With the atomic submarine a reality, the atomic powered airplane probably near at hand and with the realization that we have very limited information on chronic radiation effects on man, then one is hard pressed to extrapolate from the amount available on the mouse and rat and apply it to man. Although the Commission who worked up the human data on the two bombed Japanese cities has done a noble job, the rapid dispersion of the Japanese population and the tremendous difficulty of maintaining controlled observations makes even more precarious our predictability of radiation data to man. It thus becomes obvious in a society which does not readily accept experimentation on man that one must have a large number of well-controlled experiments on the higher primates. Such chronic radiation studies on primates are thoroughly practical and there are competent, interested groups in this country who are willing to undertake such long-term experiments (we now have a list of 12 university centers who have expressed such an interest).

It occurred to our committee that since such long-term experiments on the monkey should extend over a 20-year period, then in order to extract a maximum of data from an expensive project we could enlarge the control series by perhaps 50% at a small percentile increase in total costs and use these control animals for gerontological studies and for observations in the realm of social psychology.

By thus setting up a project which incorporates radiobiology, gerontology and social psychology, it is obvious that a wider range of scientific observers could be induced into the project and thus forestall any likelihood that should one particular group be unproductive that all groups would be unproductive. It goes without saying that any project is just



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as good as the research personnel in it. Thus, we can be broadening the scope (let me emphasize at very little additional expense) and bring in additional competent observers. Another advantage, of course, is that in general one group of workers has a tendency to catalyze and stimulate another group. When one considers the significance of this three-point program and the urgency of the radiobiology aspects of it, then it is difficult to believe that longer postponement of the program should continue.

Trusting that this, in a very percursory way, fills in the missing gaps of the proposal which you now have, I am

Sincerely yours,



Ray S. Snider

RSS/mcw