

The Commissioner of Food and Drugs has been delegated authority to establish ad hoc committees to advise him on matters of importance and urgency.

Earlier I thought I could not address recommendation 24 of the task force report which suggested establishment of additional FDA basic and clinical laboratories to augment its research capability. However, on January 27, the President announced the establishment of the National Center for Toxicological Research at the Pine Bluff Arsenal in Arkansas.

The President's budget request for fiscal year 1972 contains an additional \$4 million for the FDA for a long-term program to determine the cumulative effect of chemical additives, and to establish levels of such additives which can be safely tolerated by man. The Pine Bluff facilities will be equipped to make low-dosage studies on large populations of animals, what has been called the mega-mouse experiments in some quarters. The dosages will much more nearly approximate quantities consumed by man. The results of these studies, therefore, should provide much better support for developing consumer protection policies with regard to various kinds of additives. This facility should be an important laboratory addition to our resources for assessing potential hazards to man which may exist or which may develop.

Senator NELSON. Well, that lab is already there.

Dr. STEINFELD. Yes. That lab is engaged in the disposal of the biologic warfare stockpile currently.

Senator NELSON. But there is going to be a series of studies conducted there on food additives and their effects?

Dr. STEINFELD. On food additives and other chemicals, yes, sir. The idea is that as soon as the place is certified to be free of any hazard, both FDA and EPA will begin renovating and constructing the necessary facilities to carry out large scale animal testing.

Senator NELSON. Food additives and what other things?

Dr. STEINFELD. Well, there are other chemicals to which we are exposed which may get into our water supply.

Senator NELSON. Are you talking about herbicides, pesticides?

Dr. STEINFELD. Pesticides and recently the things we find in detergents. I think any of the chemicals to which we are exposed in large measure should certainly be tested. The thing we have not done, Senator Nelson, is compare the interaction of a number of these chemicals and this is one of the real problems. The problem was not NTA alone but NTA picking up methyl mercury or other metals and transporting it where it ordinarily would not go. So the interactions are a big area that still must be studied.

Recommendation 25 proposed a study to reappraise the efficiency of methods now used in our Department to evaluate the safety and effectiveness of pharmaceuticals. In December 1969, the Secretary authorized convening of a study group (HEW study group on research and regulation) to act on this recommendation. This study group was made up of representatives of the Department (OS, NIH, and FDA), industry, higher education, and consumer groups. It met regularly from January to May 1970 and filed a report with the Commissioner of Food and Drugs during June 1970. The report is still under consideration at this time.