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**PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE** Special Meeting on ASM Committee Advisory to the U.S. Army Biological Laboratories: On November 11 at 1 pm the Northern California Branch of the ASM will hold a special meeting to consider the ASM's involvement in preparations for biological warfare. The desire for such a meeting was expressed at the regular Spring Meeting 1967 held in Davis. It arose in part from the curiosity of all those at the meeting about the ASM's Committee Advisory to the U.S. Army Biological Laboratories. Hence the Local Branch unanimously directed to the Council of the ASM a request for information concerning the Advisory Committee. That request (endorsed by the Southern California Branch) was answered in three ways which I will indicate before describing the special meeting:

1. Philipp Gerhardt, then ASM Secretary, replied with the following description: "At the request of the Armed Forces the Council in 1955 appointed a committee advisory to the Chemical Corps. The Committee's purpose, apparently, is to advise the Chief of the Chemical Corps on problems that he submits. The Committee meets once or twice each year at the request of the Chemical Corps. Because many of the subjects to be discussed involve classified information, membership on the Committee requires security clearance. In making replacements the President traditionally confers with the Chairman of the Committee and with the Technical Director of Fort Detrick, Maryland, to be sure that the appointees will be qualified to accomplish their purpose and likely will pass a security clearance. The Council in 1960 authorized exemption of this Committee from the three-year time limit."
2. A charge to the Committee and a description of its activities was composed and appeared in the Committee's 1967 report (pp. 20-21 ASM News, Aug. 1967). Prior to this time the Committee had been charged only with advising on "problems" submitted by the Chief of the Chemical Corps. The new charge specifies that the Committee will offer "scientific advice and professional advice" to the Technical Director of Fort Detrick.
3. The Committee's report and our request for information were submitted to the Council and this led to discussion as described on page 12 of ASM News, August 1967.

While previous questions may have been answered, several new questions have been raised by these responses. In essence the Local Branch has opened a dialogue within the ASM on the nature of the Society's participation in preparations for biological warfare. This dialogue can continue at the special meeting at which Dr. James Moulder, the present Chairman of the Advisory Committee, will be a featured speaker. I urge all of you who are curious about the Committee to attend. If you wish, bring a list of questions with you. The following are some of the questions which have occurred to me as I have been thinking about the Advisory Committee:

1. Other than the U.S. Army Biological Laboratories what institutes, laboratories, departments, or concerns carrying out fundamental or applied research does the ASM advise scientifically and professionally through its standing committees?

2. Does the ASM have a legal obligation to advise the Army on matters concerning biological warfare?
3. Does any scientific society except those legally obligated, such as the American Chemical Society, advise the Army on biological and chemical warfare?
4. Does the ASM derive any benefit for its members from advising the U.S. Army Biological Laboratories, i.e., does the Advisory Committee benefit the ASM or the Army?
5. Should the conclusions of the deliberations of any ASM committee be kept secret from the ASM membership?

It is obvious that the answers to these questions are cut and dried. Were they the only relevant kind of questions to be asked about the Committee then it would be more appropriate to hold a vote rather than a discussion. In fact, other questions may be asked such as the following:

1. Should the ASM attempt to exert any influence with the Army?
2. Toward what goals should the ASM influence the Army?
3. What are the effective ways of achieving this influence?
4. Should the ASM assume any one of the many possible public positions on the political, moral, and scientific aspects of biological warfare?

Although the focus of the meeting will be on the ASM's Advisory Committee, there are many other matters which will predictably be raised in discussing the Committee. Secrecy in microbiological research, the strategic aims and purposes of biological warfare and the relation of chemical to biological warfare are but a few of these matters. They will be discussed by Brig. Gen J. H. Rothschild, USA (ret.) and Dr. Joshua Lederberg as a prelude to our discussion of the Advisory Committee. Gen. Rothschild was a Commanding General, U.S. Army Chemical Corps Research and Development Command, in charge of research in Chemical, Biological, and Radiological Warfare. He has written a book entitled Tomorrow's Weapons (McGraw-Hill, 1964) which I can recommend to all as a primer of chemical and biological warfare. Dr. Lederberg (Department of Genetics, Stanford University) is a Nobel Laureate and a distinguished geneticist. He has been a leading proponent of the need to distinguish between chemical and biological warfare capabilities as a first step towards a political solution of the problems posed by biological warfare.

Because this special meeting will be mainly devoted to a consideration of the ASM's role in preparations for biological warfare, the Executive Committee has decided to limit attendance at the meeting. Members of the ASM and members of the Northern California Branch of the ASM will be eligible to attend. As you know, membership in the Local Branch is obtained separately from membership in the ASM; membership in one does not imply or necessitate membership in the other. The Local Branch sponsors activities which are for the benefit of all ASM members whether or not they belong to the Local Branch. This special meeting will be no exception. Qualified people will be able to join at the door either the ASM, the Local Branch, or both. To defray the expenses of this special meeting a charge of 50¢ per person will be made.

Alvin J. Clark, President, NCB-ASM

SECRETARY'S MESSAGE    If you are not now a member of the ASM, or if you know of anyone who is not now a member and wishes to join, may we invite you to join through the Northern California Branch. No additional membership dues are required over that which is normally found, however you must become