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WASHINGTON, D. C.

NATIONAL RESEARCH COUNCIL

Established in 1916 by the National Academy of Sciences
under its Congressional Charter and organized with the cooperation of the
National Scientific and Technical Societies of the United States

DIVISION OF MEDICAL SCIENCES COMMITTEE FOR RESEARCH IN PROBLEMS OF SEX 370 SEVENTH AVENUE, NEW YORK CITY

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EARL F. ZINN, Executive Secretary

April 12, 1928

Col. Arthur Woods
61 Broadway
New York City

Dear Col. Woods:

The National Research Council is now maintaining, with the financial aid of the Bureau of Social Hygiene and through the activities of a special Committee of scientific experts, a number of investigations on fundamental scientific problems of sex. This work is now going on under an arrangement extending to June 30th, 1928. Unless the present arrangement is renewed, or a new one made, important research work in this field now being carried on by outstanding investigators at various centers of research must cease. While this work has already yielded results of value much of it needs further time and opportunity to realize its best outcome.

The National Research Council has by formal action recently approved the work of its committee and investigators and has recommended the continuance of the work. On behalf of the Council, therefore, I am requesting that the Bureau of Social Hygiene provide further financial aid to the Council during a five-year period, beginning July 1st, 1928, of a total amount of \$325,000 in order to enable the Council to expend an average of \$65,000 annually for work in this field for five years, no more than \$75,000 to be expended in any one year.

To illustrate the character of the proposed investigations, the personnel involved and the distribution of the work among various research centers I append to this letter a specific research program and budget for the first year of a five-year period beginning July 1st, 1928. (See Exhibit A.) It is understood that the specific one-year program may vary somewhat with the succeeding years of the five-year period.

In addition to the above request for funds to be devoted to the direct maintenance of specific investigations it is requested that a further sum of \$10,000 be given the Council by the Bureau for one year (July 1st, 1928 - June 30th, 1929.) to be devoted to the support of the Committee's promotional activities during that period.

N.R.C. - Com. Sex Research

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If the subject were sufficiently popular and a large number of investigators were already engaged in research in this field the Committee would not need to search for and encourage workers and to suggest fields of endeavor. But this situation does not exist. The Committee has had therefore to engage actively in promotional work in the way of determining promising lines of investigation; of initiating research in neglected phases of the subject; and of finding qualified investigators and shaping conditions so that these investigators can work most effectively.

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Systematic scientific study of the fundamental problems of sex and reproduction has not kept pace with medical, educational and social needs. This has been due in part to the social taboos which have surrounded the subject and in part to its complexity. Yet it is realized by those who give serious thought to the matter that these problems are as much in need of and as susceptible to thorough scientific study as, for example, nutrition or any other important function. It is this situation which prompted the National Research Council, through a special Committee in its Division of Medical Sciences, to promote research in this field.

This committee has been actively engaged in this work during the past five years. It first determined in broad outline the major fields in which research could be most profitably promoted. It canvassed the situation in this country and in Europe with the view to determining the investigators whose work could be most profitably supported; to the extent to which it has seemed desirable and to which its funds have permitted, it has augmented the resources of some investigators already at work thereby increasing the pace of research; it has endeavored constantly to discover younger investigators of promise and to encourage them to direct their interests toward this field of research; it has initiated research in neglected phases of the subject; and it is engaged in establishing research in the problems of sex and reproduction on a sound basis in a few leading universities in this country.

The results of the past five years are just beginning to be apparent. In the field of biochemistry and physiology notable contributions have been made by the Committee's investigators to our knowledge of the nature and mode of action of the sex hormones. Also contributions of importance have been made to our knowledge of the interrelationship of the gonads to other glands of internal secretion, notably the pituitary. Great impetus has been given to the study of the reproductive function by virtue of Stockard's discovery of a method for determining the changes during the oestrous and menstrual cycles. A complete list of the results of the investigators' work is contained in the published reports, a list of which is submitted herewith as Exhibit B.

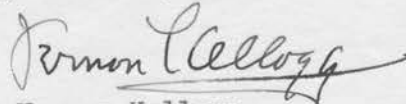
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One of the most difficult problems which the Committee has had to face is that of being able to insure continuity of support over a period sufficiently long to warrant an investigator undertaking the study of a complex problem. In many instances it is necessary for the investigator to assemble and train a staff of technical assistants if the program is at all comprehensive. In these circumstances if he is unable to assure these assistants of appointment for a reasonably long period they are attracted to other positions and he has the task of replacing them, with the wasteful process of training to be gone through again. Examples of this are the research staffs of Dr. Lillie in the University of Chicago and Dr. Evans in the University of California. Another example of the difficulty of undertaking certain types of research on an annual basis is that of Dr. Wissler. Dr. Wissler is endeavoring to develop a program for the study of primitive and semi-primitive peoples. In addition to the special training which the investigator must have, a considerable amount of time is required for him to win the confidence of the group studied. It is only after these preliminaries are gone through that he will be in a position to collect these data. Because of this Dr. Wissler is able to propose a program that is practicable provided he is assured of support for at least a three-year, and preferably a five-year, period. Without such assurance it would be impracticable for him to attempt such an investigation.

With the earnest hope that the Bureau of Social Hygiene may see its way to grant the request of the National Research Council for further aid in carrying on the important work now so well under way by virtue of the Bureau's assistance,

I am,

Very sincerely yours,



Vernon Kellogg

Permanent Secretary, National Research Council

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