DISCUSSION, SYMPOSIUM ON VIRUS INFECTIONS - 4.

DR. A. SABIN, Cincinnati, Ohio: I would like to comment briefly on what Dr. Murphy and Dr. Piszczek have said. The more data that is accumulated, the more it is evident that transmission of poliomyelitis may occur in many different ways. It may take one set of circumstances to give rise to a marked epidemic in the summer, and another set of circumstances to cause the disease to go on through the winter. I think if we keep in mind the various factors concerned in the transmission of typhoid fever and dysentery we might go a long way in further investigations on poliomyelitis. We must, however, also carry out more studies on blood-sucking insects, and settle one way or another the question of a possible animal reservoir.

What to do with stools of poliomyelitis patients? We know that the stools may have virus in them and we have often discussed the best way to treat them to destroy the virus, but no method has yet been worked out for the routine treatment of such discharges in hospitals. We have to fall back on what we know will destroy the virus when it is contained in other media. Heat is the best. I think there should be some place in each contagious disease hospital where bedpans could be taken and sterilized completely, contents and all. In the homes it may be more expedient to mix the stools with undiluted formalin and allow the mixture to stand for about 4 hours before sending it on its course into the urban sewage system or the rural privy.