MEMORANDUM

February 16, 1961

TO: Members, Enterovirus Committee

FROM: Executive Secretary, Enterovirus Committee

SUBJECT: Gradocol Membranes.

I am enclosing for your information and comments a copy of a letter recently received from Dr. F. Himmelweif of the Wright-Fleming Institute of Microbiology, London, England, in reference to the present status of Gradocol membrane production.

I would appreciate your comments and suggestions.

Marvin M. Harris, Ph.D.

Enclosure

Before considering financial support for production, have someone investigate the reliability and comparability of "Millegro" in USA
Marvin M. Harris, Esq., Ph.D.,
Chief, Human Virology Section,
Viruses and Cancer Program,
National Cancer Institute,
Department of Health, Education and Welfare,
Bethesda 14, MD.,
U.S.A.

Dear Dr. Harris:

I am very sorry that you have not received an earlier reply to your letter of December 13th addressed to the Institute.

As soon as I was informed of your letter, I sought guidance from my principals who had earlier in the year decided that the production of Gradocol Membranes should, for the time being, be halted. The main reasons for this decision were that the production of Gradocol Membranes for "commercial" purposes results in a heavy financial loss for the Institute and that the space required for this activity can be used with advantage for other purposes.

Your letter is being given the most serious consideration by the authorities. There is, in principle, a desire to resume the production of membranes in order to continue to give this service to virology. However, the difficulties of finding space and financial assistance have, so far, not been overcome, and I am therefore, unfortunately, not as yet in a position to give you a clear-cut answer to your question about our future policy. This uncertainty, and my hope that a favourable decision might soon be forthcoming, are the reasons for having delayed answering your letter.

The possibility of finding suitable premises outside the Institute for production purposes is at present being investigated. However, the financial difficulties are formidable.

Dr. Andrews has informed me that you might possibly be able to give us financial assistance. If this were so, it might help matters if I could approach my authorities with an appropriate proposal. Regarding the possibility of interesting other manufacturers in the production of Gradocol Membranes, efforts in this country were singularly unsuccessful, chiefly because no commercial firm could visualize a profitable outcome of such
an undertaking. In the event of our not restarting production in the foreseeable future, we would, of course, be happy to provide information to any prospective manufacturer in the U.S.A. The method of production is described in great detail by W. J. Elford in an article in the Handbuch der Virusforschung, I. Vienna: Springer, 1938. I must point out, however, that experience and "know-how" are of fundamental importance, and that if the possibility arises that a manufacturer in the U.S.A. is prepared to undertake production, it would be best for him to send a qualified chemist to us for training.

However, I am hoping that our difficulties will be overcome and that we shall be able to resume production ourselves. I shall not fail to inform you without delay of any developments that might arise on our side.

Yours sincerely,

/s/ F. Himmelweit, M.D., F.R.C.P.,
Director, Dept. Virus Research.

FH/SJ

(c/o 2/16/61)