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— *The Editor comments* —

GOVERNMENT'S ROLE IN RESEARCH

A special Committee has been created in the U. S. House of Representatives with the specific purpose of conducting an investigation into government spending and involvement in science, research, and technology. The Select Committee on Government Research under the chairmanship of Rep. Carl Elliott, was just concluding its first few days of hearings when the assassination of President Kennedy brought an abrupt interruption to the Committee's activities. However, the hearings are expected to resume this week.

The A.P.H.A. is among those who have been asked to testify; in fact, its spokesman originally was scheduled to appear on the Tuesday morning following the ill-fated Friday in Dallas. It should be noted that the Elliott group plans a very broad spectrum investigation into all research activities in which the federal government participates. As such, the invited witnesses cover a broad range including many from aeronautics and rocketry. The preliminary calendar released by the Committee's staff listed the A.P.H.A. as the only organization invited from the pharmaceutical field, and with the exception of the American Medical Association, the only non-government organization from the health field.

It is our opinion that the inquiry being conducted by this Committee can have a very healthy effect on all of our research efforts—private as well as government. Federal support for research and technology has increased at an unbelievable rate during the past two decades, from \$74 million in 1940 to \$12.2 billion in 1963. Considering the size of this expenditure, relatively little overall coordination or long range planning has been devoted to making sure that the most efficient and effective programs are being supported in an effort to reach goals which are laudable, but which at times are very general or ill-defined. Closer Congressional scrutiny should also serve to help avert repetition of those few cases of loosely managed funds which have recently come to the attention of Congress, and which have made virtually all federal research expenditures suspect in the eyes of some Congressmen.

Consequently, it appears to be a very appropriate time for stock-taking. We sincerely hope and expect that the inquiry will prove to be beneficial to the federal government, the project grantees, and the American taxpaying public.

Edward G. Feldmann