

IN CELEBRATION OF  
DR. ARNOLD G. WEDUM'S LEGACY

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There could be no finer way to celebrate the inaugural edition of the *American Biological Safety Association Journal* than to include within it an original manuscript prepared by Dr. Arnold G. Wedum. All who knew Dr. Wedum revered him as the person most responsible for creating our profession. He was a caring and wonderful mentor for many of the early leaders of the ABSA. He was a wise and brilliant man whose knowledge of biological safety was sought by the leaders of the United States' biological research enterprise.

The following paper by Dr. Wedum was selected by the editors because of its historical and contemporary value for our profession. The report was prepared by Dr. Wedum in January of 1976. At that time, he was an employee of Litton Bionetics, Inc., a firm under contract to the National Cancer Institute (NCI) to operate the Frederick Cancer Research Center. His role was to consult with NCI and the National Institutes of Health (NIH) on matters related to potential biological hazards associated with emerging frontiers of the biomedical sciences. The report had been prepared in response to a request by Dr. Donald S. Fredrickson, Director of the NIH, for an assessment of the probable efficacy of the guidelines that were being proposed for physical containment of recombinant DNA molecules. Dr. Fredrickson wanted to ensure that the NIH Advisory Committee had full knowledge of the Fort Detrick experience in protecting laboratory workers and the public from potential hazards associated with infectious disease research before they advised him on the adequacy of the proposed NIH guidelines for research involving recombinant DNA molecules.

This paper is a typical example of Dr. Wedum's intellect, his deliberate and careful style in assessing hazards, and his vast experience. Its content is instructive to all of us today. It brings to light the fundamental concepts of our profession. And it demonstrates how his lifelong efforts to promote occupational health and safety in infectious disease research gave our profession credibility and a valid scientific relevance.

The NIH Advisory Committee valued his counsel and recommended to Dr. Fredrickson that he approve the guidelines that had been prepared to govern the conduct of NIH supported research on recombinant DNA molecules. The NIH Guidelines were issued on June 23, 1976. Sadly, Dr. Wedum died on June 22 at the age of 73, one day before the approved NIH guidelines were issued.

The editors plan to include two additional papers prepared by Dr. Wedum in future editions of the *ABSAJ*.