

Introductory Remarks

Jack W. Milder

American Cancer Society, New York, New York

In October 1961 the American Cancer Society sponsored a conference on *The Possible Role of Immunology in Cancer*. This was one of the first small working-type conferences held on this subject. A portion of the program was devoted to a discussion of cancer antigens. Several questions were posed, such as: Did such an entity as cancer antigens really exist? If so, how specific were they or should they be? What methods were in existence for their detection and characterization? During the ensuing years various techniques and methods of analysis have been applied in order to gain more information about tissue antigens.

That immunologic phenomena play an important role in cancer has been established. However, the complete understanding of these phenomena has been somewhat more difficult because of their complex nature. And again the problem of how far one can interpolate animal results to the clinical situation must be coped with. The pitfalls of this area of research are still present and only through more sophisticated approaches can we hope to overcome them.

As mentioned before, the October 1961 meeting devoted only a portion of its program to cancer antigens. In the intervening six years, sufficient work has been accomplished and data accumulated to make it feasible for a conference to be held on *Tumor Specific Antigens*. We are proud to present the Proceedings of this symposium on the following pages. Once again this meeting was conducted as a workshop, roundtable type of meeting with a limited number of individuals being invited to participate. The Proceedings contain the formal

presentations and summaries of the informal discussion. An attempt has been made to cover this area of research in as precise a manner as possible. The reader will find a presentation of the views of most of those individuals actively working in the field. Obviously it was impossible to include everyone currently engaged in this work. However, it is felt that a good cross-sectional representation does appear. It is hoped that these Proceedings as a published document will provide an important piece of reference material which others working in the field may use as a guide for future endeavors.

Immunology as a science, and especially as it relates to the problem of cancer, has always been provocative in nature. Reproducible data have not been easy to aggregate. The inherent frustrations of the field have been frequent and baffling. Nevertheless the challenge has been met by many, and through persistent effort a brighter horizon now presents itself for a better understanding of the immune mechanism in man. Let us hope this knowledge may act as a steppingstone toward revealing another one of the many secrets of nature in life.

The Program Planning Committee consisted of Dr. Chester M. Southam, Chairman, Dr. D. Bernard Amos, Dr. Mortimer B. Lipsett, and Dr. Chandler A. Stetson. On behalf of the Society and myself I wish to express my sincere appreciation and thanks to these individuals for the time and effort spent in formulating this program. Only through such continued cooperation and assistance can symposia of this nature be held. This type of conference will always be a most important method of communication to the scientific public at large.