

Leprosy Vaccines

TO THE EDITOR:

I would like to thank Dr. Kato for his Letter to the Editor "Comments on Leprosy Vaccination" (IJL 57:693, 1989). I appreciate the frank expression of his thinking on this subject. It is a matter on which I concur fully with him and have for many years. I have used BCG for partial protection of infants and children who are in intimate contact with leprosy patients and have found it satisfactory; but it is certainly not foolproof in prevention. However, I do feel it is worthwhile.

As one considers what might be gained by some substitute or addition to BCG, it is hard to visualize something which will be of a practical nature. It seems that the present approach will never be economically feasible and, as Dr. Kato said, there are many questions involved that make it look most extremely impractical. It is essential for re-

search scientists to possess vision. It is also important for them to think through and visualize the ultimate results of what they are seeking by their research. There should be some way to envision a practical use for the results of their studies. As one evaluates the present research on a vaccine, it is very difficult to see how it can ever be an economic feasibility and at least the present generation of potential vaccines may well be unlikely to be of great immunological significance.

Again, a thank you to Dr. Kato. It is good of him to help us "keep our feet on the ground."

—Roy E. Pfaltzgraff, M.D.

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