

## SECTION I

entering the human environment. Any further improvement at the screening level would entail an expenditure of effort out of all proportion to the value of the additional information that might be gained." The committee further acknowledged "that in this rapidly developing area the state of knowledge is such that, because each test is directed at a limited aspect of the hereditary process, equivalent evidence derived from other test systems with different genetic endpoints could be accepted as an alternative to part of the basic package. However, the onus would have to be placed on the applicant to prove that the evidence produced was at least as good as would be expected from the tests recommended above." The committee also recommended a number of supplementary tests, the results of which might help to eliminate the findings in the basic screening. Such additional evidence could be important in a risk-benefit analysis.

In conclusion, the relatively new subject of genetic toxicology, based on a wealth of genetic and molecular biological knowledge has clearly had a large influence on toxicological thinking and practice. As the results from consistent mutagenicity testing accumulate, further advances in the understanding of the significance to human welfare of chemicals with genotoxic properties must occur in the immediate future. In the meantime, the "state of the art" is such that legislative action based on mutagenicity tests alone should be regarded as premature.

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