Report of the Subgroup on Nocardiae to the International Subcommittee on the Taxonomy of the Actinomycetes

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Mexico City, Mexico

There are, at a minimum, three groups of workers with interests in at least selected nocardiae. These are the Subgroup on Nocardiae of the International Subcommittee on the Taxonomy of the Actinomycetes, the Subcommittee on Actinomycetes of the American Society for Microbiology (ASM), and the International Working Group on Mycobacteria Taxonomy (IWGMT). The latter group is interested in the "*Mycobacterium rhodochrous* complex" and *Nocardia farcinica* cultures, among other "boundary problems."

It should be emphasized that each of these three working groups is independent and can carry on parallel work or pursue different directions, depending on the decisions of each group. It is equally important to realize that firm liaison exists among these three groups. J. Adams is able to serve effectively in a liaison role between the Subgroup on Nocardiae of the International Subcommittee and the ASM Subcommittee. I have established an exchange of correspondence between A. Lind and L. Wayne of the IWGMT. In addition, all interested workers have been urged to use the *Nocardia* Newsletter as a forum for exchange of ideas and for notices about work completed or in progress. The *Nocardia* Newsletter is sent free to qualified investigators; write to J. Adams or to

S. G. Bradley if you are not currently receiving the *Nocardia* Newsletter. The fate of nocardial taxonomy will ultimately be determined by the best ideas and best efforts of the International Subcommittee, the ASM Subcommittee, and other interested microbiologists working independently.

I have been asked by the chairman, J. Adams, to report briefly on the activities of the ASM Subcommittee. We have 18 cooperating microbiologists who have begun to test the reproducibility and reliability of characteristics used to describe nocardiae. We have selected, as a starting point, many of the characteristics used by Ruth Gordon. Preliminary results indicate that these characteristics are reliable and reproducible, but the battery of tests has proven unable to describe adequately and differentially the full spectrum of organisms currently included in this group by one or another expert on the nocardia.

Our second goal has been to collect a list of all of the species names applied to organisms in the genus *Nocardia*. Concurrently, we hope to collect the relevant citations and references. This effort is in its initial stages.

S. G. Bradley
(For J. Adams, Chairman)