

SUMMARY OF STATEMENT OF SHELDON C. SOMMERS, M.D.
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PRESENTED TO THE SENATE COMMITTEE ON COMMERCE, MARCH 1965.

"There is evidence for multiple factors in lung cancer development, and extensive scientific investigation should continue to determine what role, if any, all the factors including cigarette smoking may play. The subject of the cause of the lung cancer is not closed but just barely opened." (P. 4)

"Your committee may be interested in my studies of host factors in human cancer made over the past 15 years with the help of grants from the U. S. Public Health Service. The aim was to determine what attributes there are within human beings that may affect their susceptibility to develop a certain kind of cancer, or provide resistance to developing cancer. These peculiarities of individuals, sometimes called constitutional factors, have been investigated from the autopsy material and clinical records of about 2,500 patients... (P. 1)

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"In reference to lung cancer, a series of 210 autopsied cases was examined from four hospitals in the Boston area. Of these 168 were men, a male predominance found in most series of lung cancer. In the men with squamous carcinomas, which is the most common microscopic type, 57% were heavy cigarette smokers, 18% were nonsmokers with lung cancer and had an occupational exposure known to be associated with an increased

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incidence of lung cancer. Another 19% were light smokers with occupational factors. Thus the percentage of smokers in this series of lung cancer cases appeared to be about the same as in the general population. (P. 2)

"The men with lung cancer also had more common than expected histories of serious marital problems, venereal diseases, alcoholism and severe trauma. They included a number of men with evidence of excessive nervous energy expressed by overstraining their physical capacities in various ways. McArthur, a Harvard psychologist, from his viewpoint has found the same features in lung cancer patients, some of whom he described as 'living in overdrive.'" (P. 2)

"The other finding in the men with squamous lung cancer that distinguished them from other groups was a persistence of normal testicular and prostatic structure into late middle age, when most men show some testicular atrophy and prostatic enlargement." (P. 2)

"A variety of significant contributing factors are likely. Host factors studied previously described have indicated at least two: (1) chronic inflammatory lung disease; probably bacterial, viral or both; (2) hormonal factors, particularly evidence of persistent male sex hormone production into late middle age." P. 4)

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