

January 3, 1974

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Dear Francis,

Please excuse the delay in responding to your last and very interesting letter. I could even sense your excitement about how the chromatin structure problem is going. It would seem to be important at some time to obtain diffraction data with isolated SV40 "chromatin" (how much material does one need to do that kind of analysis?) to be sure that this material displays the same reflections and spacings as occur with linear DNAs. I'm especially intrigued by the suggestion that the DNA might exist as a folded double circle and as you point out the possibility that the horeshoe structures (natural or deliberately generated) could be helpful to exploring that likelihood.

I was quite disturbed to hear that Jack Griffith turned down your invitation to visit and MRC and to discuss the chromatin work. Shocked and angry would be closer to my feelings inasmuch as he specifically asked me to write to you for such an invitation. I wrote him a most strongly worded letter urging him to go to Cambridge but I don't know if it ever reached him. If he thought England was "too cold" for a visit, he has yet to get my reaction!

My technician had planned to check out the procedure for preparing SV40 chromatin during the Christmas holiday season but that had to be scratched when she was called back to Berlin by her mother's terminal illness. So, there's no new information that I can send; hopefully with Marianne and Jack returning that work can get underway once again.

I hope the English energy austerity has not incapacitated the lab as much as it seems to have dimmed other things. Our press accounts of life in England seem grim-not just the present power shortages but the problems for the longer haul. I do hope things take a turn for the better in the New Year.

My regards and best wishes for a Good New Year to Odile, Sydney and Roger,

Sincerely yours,