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24th September, 1974

Professor Paul Berg
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Dear Paul,

I am writing immediately to say that I am willing to be a member of your organizing committee and that I already have agreed to attend the meeting in February. I am just in the final stages of drafting a document which will be my evidence before the Ashby Committee in October and I will send you and Don Brown a copy of this as soon as it is ready. I hope between now and February to expand quite a bit of it and when you get the paper you will see why it needs more work on it. I saw your programme and I thought you carried it off extremely well considering the number of morons that were participating.

I had written to Don Brown saying that I thought that members of the Edinburgh group ought to be invited, in particular Ken Murray and Peter Walker. I hope this can be done since, as you probably know, Ken Murray has already put some mammalian DNA into lambda and they are planning to do an extensive study of the human Y chromosome. Another person in Europe that I know is interested and I think might be quite helpful is Charles Weissmann in Zurich.

I have been devoting quite a lot of thought to the safety side and think that I have some ideas which might be useful to test. At any rate, our job as scientists is to think about the scientific experiments that we can do not only to get more information but also to lower the risks of doing this work.

Don Brown sent me a copy of extensive correspondence he has been having with Roy Curtis III and this has given me some idea of what we have to contend with.

One approach that I have been exploring, and bits of it will be found in the document I will send you, is to try and formulate two experiments which one might perform because of their potential outcomes but which bound the range of risks; that is one should be entirely hazard-free and the other should have all the hazardous potentialities exposed. My idea is that other experiments can then be placed on this scale and then if we have the protective measures covering the entire scale we will then be able to try to match the two things.

There is one last point to ponder on. This is the whole question of how one might have to deal with the drug companies who, of course, can practise commercial secrecy and not publish anything of their plans. Since many of

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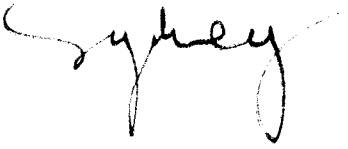
them are international and since this work does not take massive technology they could do it almost anywhere in the world if they wanted to and even if we were to get the major countries to agree on some measures the drug companies could still find themselves "off-shore" havens, countries like Uganda or Chile, for example.

I hope that these remarks will give you some inkling about some of the lines I have been thinking along and I certainly would be delighted to help with the conference.

Yours ever,



Sydney Brenner