

AUG 13 1971



DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION, AND WELFARE
PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICE
NATIONAL INSTITUTES OF HEALTH
BETHESDA, MARYLAND 20014

August 11, 1971

Dear Joshua,

Thank you very much for your most helpful review and criticism of the sickling proposal. I have not answered earlier because, it seems, all the secretaries have gone on vacation simultaneously but I decided to peck this with my two fingers, for several things are happening here which you ought to know.

First, the proposal. The version I sent you is only a first draft which was developed to get the reaction of the NHLI as to what they wanted. At that time they had not as yet set up a mechanism for review of proposals in sickle cell anemia, nor had they any idea what this mechanism would finally be. We were told that they liked the proposal, that procedures for review would be established sometime in September and that they would give us guidelines for writing up the final application.

We do plan to make sibling comparisons and comparisons between sibling mothers. As you know, about 20% of our Study children are repeat pregnancies, most of them second, but some third, fourth, and even fifth. We could include siblings who were not born in the Study without much difficulty but we will not have on them all the data which we have on the Study children. Similarly, about 6000 Study mothers are close relatives of other Study mothers, most of them sisters, but some mothers, daughters and sisters-in-law. The opportunities of doing a thorough study are excellent, provided that we are allowed to go through with it, which brings me to the second part of my discourse.

An administrative storm is brewing over the Collaborative Study. In spite of the restoration of funds by the House and the Senate the decision has been made in Dr. Marston's office to phase the Study out as soon as possible, get rid of most of the PRB scientists and leave a skeleton staff to complete data intake and perform analyses in the form of simple cross-tabulations. The ax has fallen liberally. Most of the scientific staff here has been told to find other jobs by next spring and I was told that I, too, will soon leave the Branch, though I will still have a job in the Institute but in some other capacity. I think that I made a good case against abandoning all the promising projects which we started in the genetic area, and was finally promised that I will be allowed to work on them in my new capacity, whatever that

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will turn out to be.

All this will probably come about during the next six months. The whole thing is still very nebulous and makes no sense, whatsoever. As you can imagine, the atmosphere here is quite depressing. If you get to Washington before the Paris meetings I would very much appreciate the opportunity of discussing this with you at some length, otherwise we can do that in Paris under more pleasant surroundings.

Very cordially,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read 'D. H. S.', written in dark ink.