

October 10, 1985

Dear Mal:

Thanks very much for the preprint of your Science paper on the mRNA species. I think these RNA species were missed by us because we were concentrating only on the major classes. However, be careful with your supply of cells. Feorino has produced HTLV-II as the AIDS virus a year ago and a hamster cell line as a source of human line which supposedly contained the main candidate AIDS virus. This was in early 1984, and it cost Jim Mullins one year of misguided molecular biology. However, I do not believe this affects your paper.

One point which I do believe is a problem is your introduction of the term "AIDS Retrovirus." There have been strong views expressed by numerous clinicians against the use of the word AIDS in the naming of this virus, and it is notable that NIH has been a consistent part of that policy; i.e., me, Tony Fauci (see his letter to Varmus), and the Clinical Directors of NCI (see Broder's letters). Mal, this can only cause more stress and strain and does not do anything for you. The present accepted generic name between the Pasteur group and us is HTLV-III/LAV or LAV/HTLV-III and then use of specific names for specific isolates throughout a paper; e.g., the generic name is in a title, abstract, or whenever the virus is generally referred to. Then the specific strain is simply used throughout a text; e.g., ARV, LAV, HTLV-III_B, RF, etc.

I hope you will consider this policy as unifying, wise, and fair. Perhaps we will come to a new and different name in the near future.

Regards,

Bob Gallo