

September 17, 1986

*See file page 402*

Dr. Wyngaarden:

Bob asked me to send the "slanted" Lasker press release to you. + some other info.

Some quick notes to help you interpret the scribbles on this information:

1. The first three pages are the photo captions which list briefly what each recipient is winning the award for. The main problem is that Montagnier is listed as "discovering the retrovirus responsible" and Bob is listed as "unique contributions to understanding AIDS".

We feel that either all three should read for "contributions toward the identification of a family of viruses that are the etiological agent of AIDS" or more clearly reflect in Bob's that he proved the cause of AIDS and developed a blood test that has made the blood supply safe.

2. Luc Montagnier's press release again states that he discovered the retrovirus responsible for AIDS. On the second page of his press release, the last paragraph states:

"While other investigators hypothesized that the known human T-cell leukemia retroviruses (HTLV-I and HTLV-II) might cause AIDS, Dr. Montagnier based his research on the premise that a different retrovirus is involved."

This statement implies that Bob and Max were on the wrong track and that Montagnier was the only one on the right track. We feel this sentence should be removed.

On the third page of his press release there is a paragraph which states "His work with viruses led him to the conviction (shared by only a few other far-seeing scientists of the time) that retroviruses could be involved in human cancers as they were in certain animal tumors." This should be removed. This was Bob's conviction not Montagnier's.

3. Bob's press release is overall more vague than it could be. Yes, he did show "intellectual leadership" but he also: a) independently isolated the virus; b) developed 48 independent isolates; c) proved they were all the same virus (HTLV-III); d) serologically proved that this new agent caused AIDS and was not an opportunistic infection; and e) developed the blood test which is being used today to ensure the safety of the blood supply.

For example, page 4 of his press release, the last sentence of the first paragraph simply mentions the blood test almost as an aside. What Bob and his lab have done is saving lives. It deserves a paragraph of its own.

Ann Sliski