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Dr. Robin Weiss
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Royal Cancer Hospital, Chester Beatty Institute
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Dear Robin:

In reviewing your remarks again in that Crewdson piece, I feel compelled to ask you if you really believe your comment about being misled by me (the so-called last year). You told me by phone this was because of my letter of September 23, 1983 to you and to a few other colleagues. However, (1) by early March 1984 (hardly even six months, not a year) I went to the Pasteur Institute and told them we were confident about the cause, had a blood test, and that the virus was very likely the same as theirs. (2) It is not characteristic of you to be so influenced by others. Both you and the Pasteur group had all the right in the world to think independently, and in their case to convince people, develop the blood test and prove etiology. I would still stand by most of the meaning of that letter. Information in my hands by September 1983 was that HTLV-I itself, not a variant as I hypothesized, was present in only about 10% of AIDS cases probably as an adventitious infection. Other retrovirus particles - ill-defined and difficult to grow were being found -- whether these were all the same virus (and the same as LAV), we could not tell for sure. Also, they were only sporadically detected. EM's, even when RT positive, were usually negative or when looking positive did not look like those published by Montagnier. It was only after Cold Spring Harbor that I saw their newer data and new EMs. Then I strongly suspected we were dealing with the same things. Then we pushed hard as we could, increasing our efforts in persons and in work per person.

You must know this is an anguishing problem for me, mostly because I expected more from long-time friends. It is hard for me to understand why you had taken the article to CSH, harder still to understand people there photocopying it. I am either extremely naive or I somehow miss the "spirit" that led to this. Doesn't it seem mean-spirited to you?

Sincerely yours,



Robert C. Gallo