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Dear Bob,

I am writing to let you know our opinion (Françoise, Jean-Claude Simon and I) about the projects of joined papers.

1/ Paper on proteins : This paper is close to the final form. We gave a copy to Sarngadharan at the NCI meeting, with the original figures. He basically agreed on this version and proposed some minor corrections. If you also agree, please send back to Jean-Claude the copy with original figures and the proposed corrections, so that he can send it to the Editor of Lancet.

2/ Molecular biology paper : We do not wish to co-sign this paper because a) it is essentially the work of Flossie, and we have not really participated ; b) sequence data on LAV, HTLV-III will be published very soon, so that the paper may be obsolete when it will appear.

The final point I would like to raise is nomenclature. Since sequence data do not show any significant homology between LAV/HTLV-III and the HTLV-I and -II group, to call this virus HTLV type III is confusing, since type means a strain (cf. Herpes type I, II). Before we come to a definite classification, I suggest that we call temporarily this virus LAV/HTLV-III (rather than HTLV-III/LAV, since LAV was described first). I recall that you agree on this point in Tokyo.

With best wishes for the New Year,

Sincerely,



L. Montagnier