



Memorandum

Date November 9, 1984
From Chief, LMM, NIAID
Subject Origin of the AIDS Retrovirus
To FOR THE RECORD

While attending a workshop sponsored by NIAID in Hamilton, Montana (November 1-3, 1984), I became aware that HTLV III and LAV proviral DNAs have virtually identical restriction endonuclease cleavage maps. In a presentation by Dr. Murray Gardner (University of California, Davis), a Southern blot was shown that indicated: a) LAV and HTLV III viral DNAs were indistinguishable following digestion with four different restriction enzymes, and b) an AIDS retrovirus isolated by Dr. Jay Levy (University of California, San Francisco) was completely different. My interpretation of Gardner's experiment was that Levy was "the odd man out" and ought to carefully reevaluate his AIDS virus isolates.

Today, Dr. Levy visited NIH and gave an informal presentation of his work involving AIDS retrovirus. He indicated that he had avoided obtaining AIDS retroviral isolates from France or the Gallo laboratory and had worked independently to make isolates of his own from patients in the Bay Area. Dr. Levy indicated that Southern blot analyses of the AIDS retroviral DNAs he had examined differed from one another as well as from the prototype LAV/HTLV III preparations. He concluded that AIDS retroviral isolates were heterogeneous from one another and could not explain the apparently identical restriction enzyme maps of LAV and HTLV III.

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