

Cambridge City Council : correspondence with,
June 1976 - April 1977

f.471

ReDNA

MASSACHUSETTS INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY

77 MASSACHUSETTS AVENUE
CAMBRIDGE, MASSACHUSETTS 02139

DEPARTMENT OF BIOLOGY
Room 16-541

PHONE: (617) 253-1000
3-4700

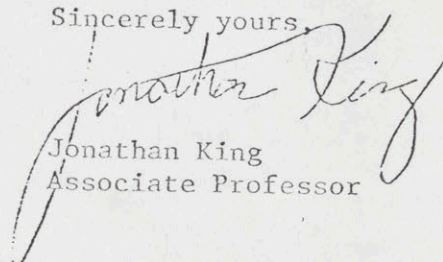
16 June, 1976

Honorable Alfred E. Vellucci
Office of the Mayor
City Hall
Cambridge, MA

Dear Mayor:

As a resident of Cambridge, and one who has been concerned for some time over dangers to laboratory workers arising from chemical and biological experimentation, I would appreciate if I might be granted time to address the City Council at the hearings next Wednesday. If I understand correctly, the hearings relate to a proposed facility to be built at Harvard for carrying on certain classes of hazardous experiments, including genetic engineering research.

Sincerely yours,


Jonathan King
Associate Professor

JAK:lms

ARCHIVAL BOND
25% COTTON

MUSEUM OF COMPARATIVE ZOOLOGY

The Agassiz Museum



HARVARD UNIVERSITY · CAMBRIDGE, MASSACHUSETTS 02138 · TEL. 617 495-2466

17 June 1976

Dear Mayor Alfred E. Vellucci,

As a Cambridge resident and biologist, I am deeply concerned about the construction of a containment facility for recombinant DNA experiments in the Harvard Biolabs building. The potential hazards of transplanting genes, from one organism to another are not known. Before this research is allowed to be conducted in a laboratory in the middle of Cambridge, the risks involved ought to be examined under the strictest of containment conditions, far from major population centers.

Furthermore, those people responsible for deciding, at the national level, levels of safety for this research are directly involved in doing the research. Large profits from this new technology are anticipated by many drug companies, and so many researchers are impatient to get on with this proposed work.

Questions about the hazards of genetic engineering are now being raised by many scientists and environmentalists and policy makers. The insistence that hazards be evaluated before this research is carried out in places like Harvard has been voiced by many people. There is a growing movement calling for caution.

I would appreciate the opportunity to speak before the Cambridge City Council when you consider this issue next Wednesday. I expect to hear from you shortly. I will, as a concerned ecologist, be happy to provide you with information about this matter.

Sincerely,

Tracy McLellan
4 Ames Street
Cambridge
494-0453

cc: Cambridge City Councilpersons

XXIV
ARCHIVAL BOND
25% COTTON

78 Rawson Road
Brookline, Mass. 02146

June 21 1976

Mayor Alfred Vellucci
Cambridge City Council
Cambridge Town Hall
Cambridge

Dear Mayor Vellucci:

I was a resident of Cambridge from 1970 to 1975, taxpayer and parent of three children in the public schools. I am an employee of the Cambridge Hospital and a teaching fellow at Harvard University. I would like to register my concern about ~~the~~ Harvard's proposed laboratory for Recombinant DNA research, and suggest that the Council withhold permission for building this until more is known about safeguarding the population from possible dangers of this research,

I think this is the kind of issue on which the common good will be furthered by a full debate between members of the general public, their representatives on the council and members of the scientific community, ~~and~~ I hope Cambridge City Council will be able to provide a forum for such a debate. May I add that I feel that the case for non-scientist's input into such debates will be weakened if we let our concern over this issue lead us to blanket condemnations of all research done by Harvard, M.I.T. or whoever in our community. I would prefer to see them weaken their case by accusing us of such an attitude which can then be shown to be false. The point I feel is not that Harvard and its research activities should automatically be seen to be at odds with our community (however true that may sometimes be!), but that this particular proposed research is at a stage when the potential benefits are largely unknown, and the potential dangers are known and considerably higher than they are likely to be after a few more years preparatory work.

My advice to the Council is that they deny Harvard a permit at the present time, but permit the University if it wishes to, to reapply after a given period, say five years, providing new evidence has accumulated concerning the hazards, safeguards and benefits of the research.

Yours sincerely,

James V. F. Long

College of Physicians & Surgeons of Columbia University

CELL CHEMISTRY LABORATORY
ANTENUCCI BUILDING
432 WEST 58TH STREET
NEW YORK, N.Y. 10019
TEL: (212) 554-6635

MAILING ADDRESS:

THE ROOSEVELT HOSPITAL
428 WEST 59TH STREET
NEW YORK, N.Y. 10019

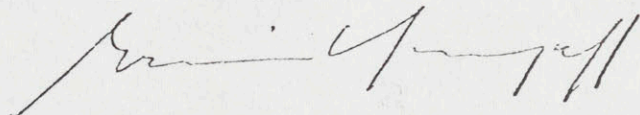
June 21, 1976

Cambridge City Council
c/o. Mayor Alfred E. Vellucci
Cambridge City Hall
Cambridge, Massachusetts 02139

Gentlemen:

In connection with your deliberations about the construction of a "Recombinant DNA" laboratory at Harvard University, I urge you to read the letter I published in Science of June 4. I understand that a copy of my article has been submitted to you. I consider this issue as so important that I take the liberty of repeating my serious warning against engaging in this type of experimentation.

Sincerely yours,



Erwin Chargaff, Ph.D., D.Sc., h.c.
Professor Emeritus of Biochemistry

EC:eh

ARCHIVAL BOND

25% COTTON

STANFORD UNIVERSITY MEDICAL CENTER

STANFORD, CALIFORNIA 94305

DEPARTMENT OF BIOCHEMISTRY
STANFORD UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF MEDICINE

Area Code 415
497-6161

June 28, 1976

Honorable Mayor Alfred E. Vellucci and
the Honorable City Council of Cambridge
City Hall
Cambridge, Mass.

Gentlemen:

I have learned through the press and from my colleagues at Harvard of your concern for public safety in the ongoing and projected research with recombinant DNA molecules. I am very familiar with the background and the technical features of such research. My training for nearly 40 years has been in medicine, microbiology and genetic chemistry.

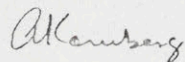
I implore you to encourage the progress of the planned facilities for genetic research at Harvard and to do your utmost to foster a spirit which advances this exceedingly important direction in medical science.

The new NIH Guidelines to which these Harvard facilities and investigators will adhere go far beyond reasonable needs for personal and public safety. I assure you that the current hazards in many chemical, bacteriological, biological and physical laboratories in Cambridge, public and private, are far greater than those anticipated in recombinant DNA research.

I realize you have heard a different point of view from some Harvard and MIT scientists who have testified before you. I believe their views are not based on sound scientific evidence and are highly exaggerated. In my estimation, they represent a tiny fraction of the scientific community.

I implore you again not to suppress the serious and responsible search for new knowledge. If scientific inquiry is stifled in Cambridge, it will be done in Waltham, Palo Alto or Moscow. In 1976, please do not squander your most precious human resources.

Respectfully yours,



Arthur Kornberg
Nobel Laureate in Medicine, 1959

AK/i



STANFORD UNIVERSITY MEDICAL CENTER

STANFORD, CALIFORNIA 94305

June 29, 1976

STANFORD UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF MEDICINE
Department of Genetics
(415) 497-5052

Honorable Mayor Alfred E. Vallucci
and the Honorable Members of the City Council
City of Cambridge, Massachusetts

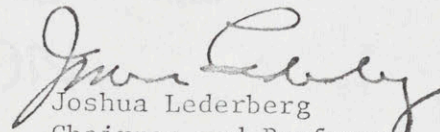
Gentlemen,

Professor Mark Ptashne of Harvard University has asked me to comment on the adequacy of the current NIH guidelines on research on recombinant DNA with respect to their sufficiency for the protection of public health.

In my view these guidelines are far more stringent than is reasonably necessary for the protection of public health. In every case where reasonable doubt could be entertained, it has been resolved in a way that imposes the most serious and conservative protective requirements. Most of the risks in question are purely conjectural and no substantive basis can be found for the dire prediction that the public health could be endangered by recombinant organisms. Nevertheless, the guidelines in their present form have accepted every such speculation as if they were accepted reality. In summary, even the most cautious view of the NIH guidelines should give citizens ample assurance that they go far beyond what is necessary to protect their health.

Elsewhere I have commented that the very act of setting up such elaborate precautions would frighten people because they go so far beyond what we do in other spheres of life. This seems to have happened in the present case - it is the very security precautions having been doubled and redoubled that has generated an unjustified fear. On the other side of the coin, I take the opportunity to indicate that research in this area has the potential for the most extraordinary contributions to medical advance and I would hope that Cambridge, Massachusetts would be proud to be the seat of major accomplishments in this direction.

Sincerely yours,


Joshua Lederberg
Chairman and Professor

JL/rr

LT. J. P. KENNEDY, JR. LABORATORIES FOR MOLECULAR MEDICINE, DEDICATED TO RESEARCH IN MENTAL RETARDATION

MOLECULAR BIOLOGY

HEREDITY

NEUROBIOLOGY

DEVELOPMENTAL MEDICINE



Cold Spring Harbor Laboratory

P.O. Box 100, Cold Spring Harbor, New York 11724 (516) 692-6660

June 29, 1976

The Honorable Mayor Alfred E. Vellucci
and Fellow Members of the City Council
City Hall
Cambridge, Massachusetts 02138

Dear Sirs:

I am writing about the possibility that you may pass legislation on July 7 to bring about a moratorium on the experiments in Cambridge involving the test-tube construction of new forms of DNA molecules. This is a procedure which promises to revolutionize the study of the genetics of higher plants and animals and most likely will provide deep insights into the functioning of our human bodies. So we should refrain from doing these experiments only if we have real indications that the new forms of DNA that we can create will be harmful either to man or other forms of useful life. I, for one, have no fears that will be the case. Even if such experiments were to be carried out freely without the restraint of specific governmental regulations, I would not worry, given the obvious proviso that we do not experiment with highly pathogenic organisms like small pox or anthrax. The new NIH guidelines that deal with recombinant DNA experiments, moreover, will lead to the construction of new laboratory facilities and experimental procedures that should effectively prevent the effective release of any of these newly created genetic variants.

Here we should always understand that evolution is constantly occurring in nature and innumerable new forms of DNA are being created daily by ordinary genetic mechanisms. Some of these new DNA molecules will be more effective than preexisting ones, and the organisms which possess them will preferentially survive. Thus even in the absence of the proposed scientific experimentation we can easily invent doomsday scenarios in which the human species will vanish because of the spontaneous evolution of a new form of life that we cannot defend ourselves from. I, however, do not believe this is likely, in part because the development of modern microbiology already has provided weapons (e.g., antibiotics) which help protect us from many forms of dangerous microbes.

We can of course decide that the prudent course for mankind is to try and stand still in our ever evolving biological world. But this would be a

The Honorable Mayor Alfred E. Vellucci
and Fellow Members of the City Council

Page 2

June 29, 1976

tragic mistake. Much of our fascination as scientists with biology arises from our knowledge that the human body is very, very imperfect and that while new knowledge may provide further complications, ignorance is never the right response to human agony. Thus, for example, my laboratory here at Cold Spring Harbor emphasizes work on several common human viruses that may cause some human cancers. We could, of course, say that such viruses are dangerous, and we should avoid work that might create even more dangerous viruses. But I feel that this would not be the response of a person who cherishes the human potential and wishes to improve the quality of the lives of future generations.

Yours sincerely,

J.D.W.

J. D. Watson
Director
Nobel Prize in Medicine 1962

JDW/mh

Special Delivery

ARCHIVAL BOND

25% COTTON

STANFORD UNIVERSITY MEDICAL CENTER
STANFORD, CALIFORNIA 94305

DEPARTMENT OF BIOCHEMISTRY

PAUL BERG

*Jack, Lulu and Sam Willson
Professor of Biochemistry*

July 2, 1976

Honorable Mayor Alfred E. Vellucci and
the Honorable City Council of Cambridge
City Hall
Cambridge, Massachusetts

Gentlemen:

Having been a pioneer in developing the recombinant DNA methodology as well as a leader amongst the scientists who first expressed concern over the potential risks of this research, I feel obliged to comment on the discussions of this matter now before you.

Few scientists, anywhere, deny that recombinant DNA research will revolutionize our understanding of basic biologic processes; and, there is little doubt that in time this increased knowledge will yield far-reaching benefits for medicine, industry and agriculture. Admittedly, the pursuit of these goals carries with it potential risks but, irrespective of the claims made by the research's critics, the extent and the certainty of these risks are largely conjectural. To state that the benefits are tenuous and hypothetical while the risks are real and immediate is to engage in sophistry bordering on dishonesty.

I believe that the recently promulgated guidelines for recombinant DNA experimentation are more stringent than any scientific evidence indicates is needed to ensure safety. The required procedures are not "smokescreens"; P3 physical containment was designed specifically to control accidental dispersal and human error and there is documented experience on which to judge the efficacy of these facilities. Moreover, most

experiments have an additional requirement which mandates the use of specially constructed organisms that cannot survive in natural environments. The two forms of containment complement each other and provide an effective barrier to dissemination of the experimental organisms.

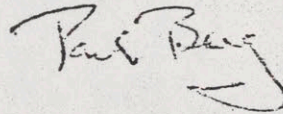
There are those who propose a ban on this research because of the use of E. coli. These individuals advocate waiting until safer organisms are developed. But, predictions about the existence of rare and fastidious safer organisms that could replace E. coli are highly speculative. Most scientists who are familiar with the genetic chemistry of E. coli K12 believe that the effective biological containment can be achieved by such specially modified organisms.

Many scientists and laymen alike are deeply concerned that the Cambridge City Council is considering suppression of a serious and responsible search for new knowledge. The implications of such action are ominous indeed. What additional forms of legitimate and worthy inquiry - scientific, artistic, or political - will self-appointed vigilante groups next condemn on the pretext of imagined risk? Consider carefully which people certain scientists speak for and whose message they carry.

An alternate to suppression is cooperation. Would it not make more sense for the Cambridge City Council to join with its responsible scientific community in efforts to monitor compliance with the guidelines and ensure the safety of the scientists and the public at large? Such an action could lead to a partnership for progress rather than a conspiracy of repression. Cooperative ventures might even alleviate the traditional tensions of the town-gown relationship.

I am hopeful, yes even optimistic, that you will hear reason, not rhetoric, and act wisely rather than precipitously.

Respectfully,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Paul Berg". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned below the typed name "Respectfully,".

PB:ab

THE SALK INSTITUTE

June 30, 1976

The Honorable Mayor Alfred Vellucci
The Honorable City Council
City Hall
Cambridge, Massachusetts 02138

Dear Sirs:

I would like to go on record in support of research on recombinant DNA to be carried out under the recent NIH guidelines for such research. I believe the guidelines are responsible and safe and provide a very large safety factor.

The biohazard laboratories planned at Harvard University are more than adequate to meet the guidelines. The scientists there have been proceeding in a highly responsible manner and the research they plan is extremely important. Their plans are supported by the vast majority of scientists familiar with the field. I believe that a local governmental restriction on the work would prove embarrassing to the City in the long run and will hurt Harvard University.

There are some people who object to the NIH guidelines, but there are always going to be objections to anything. There were a few people who objected vigorously to bringing back anything from the moon. This was not the prevailing view, but precautions were taken. I think the recombinant DNA situation is comparable. I don't think there is any danger, but I think it is quite reasonable to carry out the experiments in biohazard facilities until it is proven that there is no danger.

Sincerely yours,

Robert W. Holley

Robert W. Holley
American Cancer Society Professor
of Molecular Biology
Nobel Laureate, Medicine-1968

RWH:lw



McARDLE LABORATORY FOR CANCER RESEARCH

EDICAL CENTER

UNIVERSITY OF WISCONSIN • MADISON, WISCONSIN 53706

July 2, 1976

The Honorable Alfred E. Vellucci and
the Honorable City Council
City Hall
Cambridge, Massachusetts

Dear Mr. Mayor and Council Members:

I have been asked by a colleague in the Department of Biochemistry and Molecular Biology, Harvard University, to send you my opinion about possible hazards of research with recombinant DNA in P1, P2, or P3 facilities under the guidelines promulgated by Dr. Fredrickson, Director, National Institutes of Health, June 23, 1976.

My expertise involves animal viruses and vertebrate cells. Therefore, I restrict my comments only to research involving animal virus and vertebrate cell DNAs.

In terms of our present knowledge, I feel that there are no real accidental dangers involved in research on animal virus and vertebrate cell DNAs under the NIH guidelines. The specific dangers that have been suggested involve combinations of events that are either known not to occur or occur only at very low probabilities. Therefore, the likelihood of the occurrence of any specific danger is so low that it can be considered zero. In fact, I consider that the guidelines are probably too restrictive in terms of our present knowledge of animal virus and vertebrate DNAs.

Furthermore, I consider it ineffectual to regulate on a local level research involving possible infectious entities. Unless there is national, and preferably international, regulation, local regulation would not serve to protect the inhabitants of that locale.

In addition, I have found the members of the Department of Biochemistry and Molecular Biology, Harvard University, conservative in respect to possible safety hazards from research with animal viruses and vertebrate cells.

As taxpayers and governmental officials, you have a responsibility to insure public health and safety, but you also have a responsibility to promote the public welfare. It is conceivable that the technique of recombinant DNA may lead to major benefits in terms of public health

and welfare. Therefore, a balance must be made between the "zero" likelihood of harm and the possibility of beneficial results.

Sincerely yours,

Howard M. Temin

Howard M. Temin
Professor of Oncology
American Cancer Society Professor of
Viral Oncology and Cell Biology
Nobel Laureate in Medicine, 1975

HMT:ms

ARCHIVAL BOND
25% COTTON

THE
CHILDREN'S
HOSPITAL
MEDICAL
CENTER

300 Longwood Avenue
Boston 15, Massachusetts
Telephone: REgent 4-6000
Cable: CHIHOSPCTR BOSTONMASS

July 7, 1976

To the Honorable Alfred E. Vellucci
Mayor of Cambridge
City Hall
Cambridge, Massachusetts

Dear Sir:

As a student for many years of agents of infectious diseases, I am strongly opposed to the current proposals to prevent the re-construction of a containment facility in the Department of Biology at Harvard University - and to prohibit, by legal action the experimental study of recombinant DNA in the City of Cambridge. My principal grounds for opposition are as follows:

First: Officials of the United States Public Health Service have already approved the reconstruction of the facility and have provided grants to support it.

Such action by this Federal agency implies a careful review by competent and representative scientists of the need for the facility, as well as conformance by the grant applicants with the official requirements for safety and other conditions of the experimental work. Indeed the safety requirements (P.3) are more exacting than those obtaining in many laboratories concerned with the usual run of disease-producing agents. Moreover, it is not planned to include the study of agents of known pathogenicity in the proposed plan. I therefore consider that as much assurance of the public's safety as is possible in the light of our present knowledge has already been provided by the Health Service in approving this project.

Secondly: I am convinced that the proposed risks ^{of} such ~~as~~ researches, which so far have remained hypothetical, may be best avoided or substantially diminished by supporting the efforts of those scientists such as Professor Berg and his colleagues who, with an admirable sense of social responsibility have attempted to foresee them and through joint action with their colleagues here and elsewhere have succeeded in formulating precautionary measures accepted ^{by} many of their co-workers.

I greatly fear that this progress toward the ideal of internal spontaneous control by investigators themselves which is the ideal way to obtain safety, will be checked by arbitrary prohibitions from without. If it is, the possible dangers of independent research by individual workers uninfluenced and undeterred by the ethical and scientific thinking of their associates may be greatly enhanced.

Finally: It seems to me futile to impede or bar scientific activities of the sort that will be carried on in this or any other laboratory within the City of Cambridge by taking legal action. The study and use of mammalian cell cultures and the investigation of the properties and applications of recombinant DNA which will be pursued in the new laboratory are also being pursued vigorously and enthusiastically in many laboratories in many countries throughout the world. It appears extremely unlikely that any action taken by the authorities in Cambridge will significantly retard or divert this international scientific activity.

I hope that these remarks may be of some use in the continuance of the discussion and solution of these important problems that confront you.

Sincerely yours,

John F. Enders

John F. Enders, University
Professor Emeritus, Harvard University
Chief, Virus Unit, Division of Infectious
Diseases, The Children's Hospital Medical Center

ARCHIVAL BOND
25% COTTON

ROCHE INSTITUTE OF MOLECULAR BIOLOGY

NUTLEY, NEW JERSEY 07110

July 8, 1976

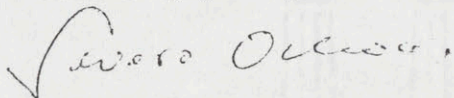
The Honorable Mayor Alfred E. Vellucci
and the Honorable City Council of Cambridge
Cambridge, Massachusetts 02138

Gentlemen:

It has come to my knowledge that Harvard University is planning the construction of a highly specialized laboratory for research on genetic engineering. I understand that all safety measures as recently specified by the Director of the National Institutes of Health, will be built into the new facility. The research to be conducted therein would therefore be carried out under an ample margin of safety, both as regards the health and well being of the professional, technical, and auxiliary personnel of the laboratory and that of the population at large.

I should like to emphasize that research on gene technology is bound to be of enormous benefit to mankind. The very large scale production of protein hormones now in short supply, to combat diseases such as diabetes and others, is envisaged as a possible short-term application of the DNA cloning techniques. Looming in the more distant future is the use of genetic engineering to cure now incurable inheritable diseases. Hundreds of such diseases are now known which are either fatal early in life, or lead to tragically crippling physical or mental disability.

Sincerely yours,



Severo Ochoa

SO:dg

Nobel Laureate in Medicine, 1959

ARCHIVAL BOND
25% COTTON

MIDDLETOWN, VA. 22645

western union

Mailgram®



SERVICE

Jan. 7, 1977

2-035485E007 01/07/77 ICS IPHMTZZ CSP BSNB
2126755911 MGM TDMT NEW YORK NY 100 01-07 0418P EST

MAYOR ALFRED VELUCCI
CITY HALL
CAMBRIDGE MA 02138

WE STRONGLY SUPPORT YOUR POSITION AGAINST ANY LABORATORY FOR
RECOMBINANT DNA RESEARCH AT HARVARD

DAVID SKINNER
BONNIE LICTASH
GEORGE PHILIPS
72 JANE ST
NEW YORK NY 10014

} Friends of the Earth

16:18 EST

HGMCOMP MGM

SOLOMON GARB
7159 SOUTH FRANKLIN WY
LITTLETON CO 80122

 Mailgram®
western union



Jan. 9, 1977

2-001370E009 01/09/77 ICS IPMBNGZ CSP BSNB
3037986801 MGM TDBN LITTLETON CO 164 01-09 0206A EST

MAYOR ALFRED VELUCCI CITY COUNCIL
CITY HALL
CAMBRIDGE MA 02201

AS A PHYSICIAN I URGE YOU TO REJECT COMPLETELY THE APPLICATION BY HARVARD TO BUILD A RECOMBINANT DNA FACILITY IN CAMBRIDGE. THIS ISSUE CONCERNS NOT ONLY CAMBRIDGE BUT THE ENTIRE NATION AND PERHAPS THE WHOLE WORLD. IF A RECOMBINANT ORGANISM ESCAPES FROM HARVARD THE PEOPLE OF CAMBRIDGE WILL OF COURSE BE THE FIRST TO SICKEN AND PERHAPS DIE. HOWEVER, THE ORGANISM COULD SPREAD FROM CAMBRIDGE AND BECOME A MAJOR NATIONAL DISASTER. YOU ARE OUR FIRST LINE OF DEFENSE YOU MAYBE OUR ONLY EFFECTIVE LINE OF DEFENSE. I AM THE AUTHOR OF A TEXTBOOK ON DISASTER AND HAVE BEEN AN ASSOCIATE PROFESSOR OF COMMUNITY HEALTH. RECOMBINANT DNA RESEARCH IS FAVORED MAINLY BY A HANDFUL OF SCIENTIST WHO HOPE TO ENHANCE THEIR SCIENTIFIC REPUTATIONS BY IT AND WHOS JUDGEMENTS HAVE BECOME CLOUDED. IT IS OPPOSED BY MOST SCIENTIST AND PHYSICIANS WHO HAVE TAKEN A POSITION ON IT.

SOLOMON GARB M.D.

7159 SOUTH FRANKLIN WAY
LITTLETON CO 80122

02:06 EST

MGMCOMP MGM

JOHN F HAYWARD
UNION HILL ROUTE 4
CARBONDALE IL 62901

 Mailgram®
western union



Jan. 9, 1977

2-020170E009 01/09/77 ICS IPMBNGZ CSP BSNB
6185495265 MGM TDBN CARBONDALE IL 100 01-09 1058P EST

MAYOR ALFRED E VELUCCI
CITY HALL
CAMBRIDGE MA 02138

AS A HARVARD ALUMNUS I AM DISMAYED THAT HARVARD IS WILLING TO
EXPERIMENT WITH RECOMBINANT DNA IN THUS CREATING NEW LIFE FORMS,
HARVARD JEOPARDIZES THE IMMEDIATE ENVIRONMENT OF CAMBRIDGE AND
ULTIMATELY THE HEALTH OF ALL PEOPLE, PLEASE USE WHAT POWER YOU HAVE TO
BLOCK THE PROJECT. I AM HOPING ALUMNI OPINIONS MAY BE MOBILIZED TO
SUPPORT ALTERNATIVE WAYS OF GENETIC RESEARCH. BE ASSURED YOU ARE NOT
ALONE IN THIS MATTER.

JOHN F HAYWARD
UNION HILL ROUTE 4
CARBONDALE IL 62901

22:58 EST

MGMCOMP MGM

4/11/77

To: Cambridge City Council
640 E. Brittain Dr. #209
Murray DTAH 84107

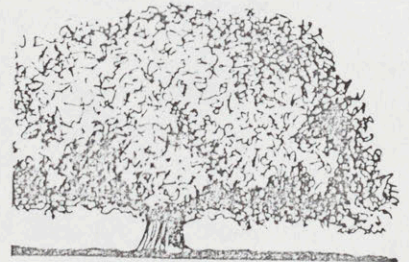
Dear Sirs -

I urge you to read the enclosed material and to stand by your decision not to allow recombinant DNA research to take place within your city at Harvard.

The severity and probability of a disaster far outweigh any possible benefits overtime. The risk to humanity and flora and fauna of the earth is unacceptable.

I urge you to lend your experience to Senator Kennedy's Health and Safety Subcommittee. I am also sending these materials to him. Please try to participate in any hearings he might hold in the Congress. I am also urging the Senator to forbid this research by federal law. Copies will also go to President-elect Carter. I hope he will direct it to the appropriate Cabinet member for action.

Sincerely,
Lamy Day



ember 11, 1976 / Vol. 7 No. 25

Action Program has been started at, 1757 S St. NW, Washington, cept in energy policy planning: ; primarily with communities and I government. For materials on , write CSPI.

ir designed to put the future on the country visited the fair at the s. Over 200 exhibitors, organiza-nergy sources and environmental es to be bigger, and is set for , Toward Tomorrow, 200 Hills 003.

ow available from the Department r 97310, for \$1.50 apiece. Each rsumptions; it has charts and on; it contains a Household y use against other Americans imazing amount of alternative formation.

remote area of northern Maine Dickey-Lincoln hydroelectric ort, is set to go on an endan- rred by statute from destroying sewort is mightier than the bull-

he worst man-made agricultural team studying the effect on of animal feed with PBB has ng," according to James Pearre one tested in the lower peninsula is showing contamination above the market; people are suffering eye coordination, lethargy, hair do. The state's apparent

quences. See page 3.

attempts to sweep the problem under the rug for three years has left many people bitter and distrustful.

Two nuclear assessments: Nuclear power plants will remain less economical than coal, says the Council on Economic Priorities (84 5th Ave., N.Y., N.Y. 10011), due to chronic shutdowns for maintenance and repair. The Public Interest Research Group in Michigan says Detroit Edison's \$1.4 billion nuke construction planned for the next five years will bankrupt taxpayers.



[copy 2]

CITY OF CAMBRIDGE
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, HOSPITAL AND WELFARE
1493 CAMBRIDGE STREET CAMBRIDGE, MASSACHUSETTS 02139
Telephone 354-2020

January 4, 1977

TO: Mayor Alfred Vellucci, City Manager James L. Sullivan,
and Honorable Members of the City Council

FROM: Francis L. Comunale, M.D., Acting Commissioner of
Health and Hospitals for the City of Cambridge *File*

RE: Determination of possible health hazard in relation
to Recombinant DNA Research

On July 8, 1976, acting in accordance with Council orders submitted by Mayor Alfred Vellucci and Councillor Daniel Clinton, City Manager James L. Sullivan appointed me Acting Commissioner of Health and Hospitals, and charged me with the responsibility of determining whether or not proposed P3 level Recombinant DNA research performed within the City limits would constitute a health hazard to those who live and work in the City of Cambridge.

Early in August, in response to another council order submitted by Mayor Alfred Vellucci, and in order to aid me in arriving at a decision, Mr. Sullivan announced the selection of an eight member Cambridge Experimental Review Board. Since the city's main concern in this controversy revolved around the potential dangers to the health and safety of the citizens of Cambridge, the board was justifiably composed of seven lay persons who had little or no scientific background or interest, but represented a broad geographical, social, ethnic and economic base of the Cambridge population. The eighth member selected was a physician who is a native of Cambridge, and whose medical specialty is in the field of Infectious Diseases.

I have spent the past four months working closely with the Review Board in studying the controversy which has arisen over the proposed use of the Recombinant DNA technology in relation to biological research. I attended all Board meetings at which testimony was given, and reviewed all printed materials submitted to the board for review. During this time, I have come to respect and admire the way in which the entire membership of the board accepted their charge, and the diligence, open-mindedness and intelligence with which they set about to carry out their responsibilities towards their fellow citizens.



CITY OF CAMBRIDGE

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, HOSPITAL AND WELFARE
1493 CAMBRIDGE STREET CAMBRIDGE, MASSACHUSETTS 02138
Telephone 354-2020

-2-

As pointed out in the introduction of the enclosed copy of the board's final report, it is obvious that much of the controversy over recombinant DNA research stems from profound philosophical, social, moral and ethical beliefs. However, I have previously mentioned that as the City's chief Health Officer, I have been charged with the task of determining whether or not a health hazard would exist should P3 level recombinant DNA research be performed within the City of Cambridge.

Therefore, although I am sure that these philosophical, ethical and moral issues raised throughout the controversy are extremely important to many individuals, including myself, my decision and recommendations concerning the performance of this research in Cambridge are based solely on the potential health hazards.

After careful consideration of all the data submitted during the past four months, it is my opinion that P3 level recombinant DNA research carried out under the NIH Guidelines established for the performance of this type of research and the additional guidelines proposed by the Cambridge Experimental Review Board, will not pose a health hazard to the citizens of Cambridge.

Therefore, I accept the report of the Experimental Review Board in its entirety and urge:

1. that the City Council take immediate action to officially adopt and implement the recommendations contained therein;
2. that a city ordinance be passed making it mandatory that all recombinant DNA research performed within the city be carried out under the guidelines set forth in the review board's report;
3. that all cases of unusual illnesses occurring in workers associated with all recombinant DNA research being carried out in Cambridge be fully investigated and be reported in detail to the Commissioner of Health and Hospitals for the City of Cambridge;
4. that the City Council take appropriate action to officially commend the members of the Cambridge Experimental Review Board, including Miss Barbara Franks, who served as technical advisor to the board, for their outstanding work in preparing this report. I am sure that through their actions, these citizens have greatly narrowed the large gap in communications which previously separated the lay and scientific communities.

February 8, 1977

Mayor Alfred Vellucci
Councilor Daniel Clinton
Councilor Sandra Graham
c/o City Hall
Cambridge, Massachusetts 02139

Honorable Mayor Vellucci, Councilors Graham and Clinton:

Find enclosed two letters that have been sent to the Cambridge Chronicle. We wish to express our deepest appreciation for the time and effort you have expended on behalf of the citizens of Cambridge during this DMA testing controversy.

THE FIGHT IS NOT OVER!

At this point in time we can only thank you, but at the next election our support for your actions will be most apparent.

Thank You.
Safety for Cambridge Residents Committee

February 8, 1977

Mr. Mac Herling
Editor
Cambridge Chronicle
673 Massachusetts Avenue
Cambridge, Massachusetts 02139

Dear Sir:

Find enclosed an open letter to the citizens of
Cambridge, expressing a consensus' viewpoint among Cambridge
residents concerning DNA research in our community. Copies
of this letter have been sent to the Cambridge Councilors.
As this will be a major issue in the next city elections,
we ask you to please print the enclosed letter.

Sincerely,

Safety for Cambridge Residents Committee

TO THE CITIZENS OF CAMBRIDGE

We, residents of Cambridge, are appalled by the reckless, irresponsible actions of six members of the Cambridge City Council.

The scientific community is at this hour still divided as to the safety hazards inherent in recombinant DNA research. Notwithstanding six members of the Council, led by Councilor Clem, have decided to risk the health of all Cambridge residents by permitting the DNA testing in Cambridge.

We remind these Councilors that their accountability is to the residents of Cambridge and not to the special interest groups at Harvard University and M.I.T.. If Harvard and M.I.T. were next to propose nuclear weapons testing in Harvard Square would Clem et. al. defend their cause at the Council Chambers? In case of an accident in nuclear weapons test the end would at least be swift and merciful to the Cambridge residents; whereas, with DNA testing the end might very well be lingering and painful.

The only bright side to this deplorable situation is that the electorate of Cambridge may now clearly see those Councilors who have shown responsibility and concern for Cambridge residents. We heartily commend Mayor Vellucci and Councilors Graham and Clinton for placing our health and welfare above all else and congratulate them for standing steadfast against the mysterious pressures exerted by Harvard and M.I.T..

There will be, barring some catastrophe born from the Council's infamous decision of February 7, 1977, future elections in Cambridge. The Cambridge voters and taxpayers will remember those Councilors who put the people's best interest first, and did not acquiesce to pressure from the tax-exempt universities.

Safety for Cambridge Residents Committee

ARCHIVAL BOND
25% COTTON

2677 Ellendale Place
Los Angeles, CA 90007
(213) 733-9307

February 10, 1977

Honorable Alfred E. Vellucci
Cambridge City Hall
795 Massachusetts Avenue
Cambridge, Massachusetts 02139

Dear Mayor Vellucci:

Enclosed is the final report of the DNA Study Committee of the City of San Diego Quality of Life Board. It was accepted by the Quality of Life Board on February 9 in what Mr. A. S. Carstens of La Jolla termed a "rubber stamp" proceeding with a bare quorum present. It now goes to the City Council for consideration (and probable adoption).

I believe you will be interested in the extensive critique of the NIH Guidelines on pp. 14-15, and the extensive recommendations on pp. 16-18. These points should be well pondered by the Cambridge City Council and your Review Board. It is evident that these sections do not justify the proposed P3 facility at UCSD. It is also evident that shunning public responsibility has been fairly common these days. Thank God for the Mayor of Cambridge.

Very truly yours,

L. Douglas DeNike
L. Douglas DeNike, Ph.D.

Enclosures

Copy: Nicholas Wade

HERBERT G. AYLSWORTH
BASIC CAUSEATION AND EFFECT

85

103 HOLWORTHY STREET

CAMBRIDGE 38, MASS.

02138.

(To a Italian, American, Yankee)
Honorable; Mayor Alfred DeLuca
Cambridge City Hall
Cambridge, Mass.

March 10th [1977]

I wish to thank you for your tireless, unselfish,
"Human Rights" fight, against the, "Self appointed, dictatorships,
of, "The American Association for the Advancement of Science",
and their controll of, all, "World Wide News" "Media", as
they, are the people, that invented the word, "Phenomenon",
which means, "We have no, "Scientific Facts"; but, we are going
to teach you, anyway, we see fit, to keep our, Dictatorships,
over all, "World Knowledge", as we teach, and dictate it for
our benefits, "right or wrong."

Sincerely and Respectfully

Herbert G. Aylsworth

P.S. Please, read carefully, the notes, on the enclosed clippings
I am also mentioning you, in my letter to, President Carter.

H.G. Aylsworth

251 East 3rd St., #1
S.L.C., Ut. 84111

March 16, 1977

Mayor Albert Vellucchi
City Hall
Cambridge, Mass.

Re: DNA recombinant research

Dear Mayor Vellucchi,

I agree with your desire to stop DNA recombinant research. I saw you on the "Now" program on Channel 7 in Salt Lake City on "The Gene Engineers."

I am enclosing copies of several letters which I have recently mailed to the Director of the National Institute of Neurological Diseases and Stroke at 9000 Rockville Pike in Bethesda, Maryland. After seeing many of the scientists involved in the DNA program, I'm not sure that my theories wouldn't be burned, before being possibly copied.

My theory, in reference to interchange of DNA between lower and higher organisms, ^{that it} has already occurred and that the barrier separating them was removed by man, by his abuse of nature. I feel that worms, possibly cancer worms, infect us, and as stated in the enclosed letters to the National Institute, and that they are cannibalistic and that our muscles, neurological and other systems are their meat.

Let us not let the eccli and the economy or profit cause our continued maiming, pain and death. Let us rebuild our cities, our states, our country, our world — ourselves — and all the others will follow!

Information also sent to Dr. Ethan Siggers, ^{PA.D.S. who is} against DNA recombinant ^{death to} neurological activity...

Love(s)

Rev. D.R.* Pilcher Godwin P

P.S. Read only if you believe in God:

*D. = Dureyl = Love Pilcher = Christ the dear
R. = Repe = Rebel Godwin = victorious God

Tel: 801-532-6129

COCHRANE HIGH SCHOOL
BOX 340, COCHRANE, ALBERTA TOL OWO

2 April '77

Mayor Alfred Velucci
Cambridge, Mass.

Dear Mayor Velucci:

I heard you interviewed early in February on the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation's program, "As It Happens." The topic that had you rather disturbed was apparently some Harvard research having to do with "recombinant DNA" experiments with contaminated cockroaches.

Have you any clippings about this research, or the names of the scientists involved? I am personally quite apprehensive about some of the biological research going on which could get out of hand if scientists don't achieve more appreciation of their responsibilities to the general populace. I would like to find out more about the issue.

If you can offer me any help in investigating this situation, I would deeply appreciate it.

Sincerely,

S. J. Gibson
S. J. Gibson, Principal

ROCKY VIEW SCHOOL DIVISION #41, CALGARY, ALBERTA