



Medical Research Council

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22nd October, 1974

Dr. Alexander Rich
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Dear Alex,

Let me first deal with a few points in your letter of 11th October. You are quite right that I was not fully informed when I first wrote to you and I apologize to you for this. However, since then I feel I have been, if anything, over-informed. For example, I have listened carefully to the tape of your lecture at Madison and the subsequent discussion and papers up to the coffee break.

Your suspicion that Aaron did not realise that the new model explained the chemical modification data is not correct. Aaron discussed this with me when he first showed me the model. A detailed discussion was left out of the Nature paper because of its length. The tertiary interactions described in the Nucleic Acids Research paper were firmly established here before your talk at Madison. They did not need your statement to give them confidence since they had such confidence already.

You are correct in saying that Robertus did not give a full account of the structure at Madison and I regret very much that he did not.

I think the article in New Scientist most unfortunate and reprehensible. As you know, Max tried to stop its publication. (I myself was abroad at the time). You should note that the New Scientist spoke to you at an early stage, then to David Blow and then to Aaron. Since you had already given your version of the story the other two felt that they had no option but to give theirs. It is almost always utter folly to speak at all to journalists and this case is no exception to the rule.

My own view of the matter is that all this has gone on far too long already and that it should now stop, whatever the rights and wrongs of the case. Aaron has agreed that on this side there should be no further publication nor public discussion of any sort about priority matters and matters arising from them, provided you and your co-workers also abide by the same restriction. Would you please let me know if you agree to this?

There is one further matter I should like to bring up now. Aaron has written a reply to your paper in PNAS on your interpretation of the monoclinic cell. This has been accepted for publication in PNAS in the September issue. I enclose a

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xerox copy of the proofs so that you can see what the paper contains. It is unfortunate that some of the paper deals with the details of your earlier model but I hope you will not make an issue of this. It was written before Aaron had any certain idea of your revised model which only became definite when your preprint arrived. As you can see, a short note was added in proof referring very briefly to your revised model in Science.

I look forward to your making available coordinates of your new structure since without them it is difficult, if not impossible, to judge exactly what your model is.

Your ever,

Francis

F.H.C. Crick

Encs.