THE PUBLIC HEALTH RESEARCH INSTITUTE
OF THE CITY OF NEW YORK, INC.

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Dr. Joshua Lederberg
Professor of Medical Genetics
University of Wisconsin School of Medicine
Genetics Building
Madison 6, Wisconsin

Dear Josh:

Thank you very much for your letter and the excellent suggestions. The problem of polymers as substrates has been extensively discussed by our committee and is of course one of the most difficult problems we have to deal with in regard to an international unit. Actually in the note in Science we suggested measuring the product of a reaction such as catalyzed by phosphorylase which is an expression of the number of linkages split or formed (e.g., 1 glycosidic linkage synthesized per mole of Pi liberated from glucose-1-phosphate), but what are we going to do with an enzyme such as lysozyme? We must hope that soon someone will make a synthetic substrate for it.

The suggestion for the selection of a simple name for the unit which can be readily abbreviated is an excellent one. I hope you don't mind that I am turning over your letter to Dr. Sidney Colowick, who is one of the American representatives on the International Committee on Enzyme Nomenclature which will take up the problem of an international enzyme unit during the meetings in Vienna. In case you should have some good suggestions regarding an easy name for this unit, both our committee and theirs will appreciate hearing them.

I enjoyed reading your comments regarding the moon problem and I am glad you have such an excellent response to your efforts.

With best personal regards,

Sincerely yours,

Efraim Racker, M.D.
Chief, Division of
Nutrition and Physiology

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