Institut Pasteur
25, RUE DU DOCTEUR ROUX
(XVe Arrondt)
Téléphone : 566 - 58-00

Paris, le 12. XII 1973

Dear Temin,

Ribodeoxyvirus

with kindregards

Yours sincerely

A. Dulbecco

I received today in Banyuls-sur-Mer (66650) your letter of October 12th. As I have no typewriter I am obliged to answer in manuscript and do hope that my handwriting will not prove too difficult problems. I shall try to answer the different points raised in your letter.

Of course the use of sigla in a generic name is forbidden by the rules. A rule which a number of virologists have not accepted. They continue to use sigla or hybrids of words and of sigla. In doing so they hope to succeed in imposing names which violate the rule, because these names will have been in use long enough... Nothing can be done against this oblique procedure which shows a total disrespect of the law and nonetheless total lack of discipline.

Why have rules if they are only good to be transgressed?

[I] think that the rule concerning sigla [sh]ould be rescinded. This would be regrettable. [Wh]at shall we do when Chinese or Hungarians or Patagons will propose [si]gla based on their own language?

[F]or a nomenclature, an international nomenclature, cannot be based only on English words.

On the name Oncorna. You are [ri]ght to propose substitute.

Oncoribovirus would be suitable. And why not more simply Oncovirus.

Of course a type species should be designated).

[As] far as I know all DNA oncogenic viruses are named (all known viruses) so there [c]an be no confusion.

x

[Si]nce I have founded the ICNV I have [a]lways had the impression that a number [of] virologists ignore what a nomenclature is.

Also ignore the basis of systematics and often confuse nomenclature with systematics. I have written enough articles on the subject and have resigned from the ICNV, finding painting more rewarding that unpleasant and useless discussions. I would be pleased to answer any other questions (shall be back in Paris next week).

With kind regards

Sincerely yours

André Lwoff

P.S. Please feel free to circulate this letter to all it may concern