

February 25, 1977

Dr. Donald S. Fredrickson
Director
National Institutes of Health
Bethesda, Maryland 20014

Dear Don:

First I want to tell you how pleased I am that the Secretary of HEW retained you as Director and, as reported in Science, made gestures of strong support for the NIH. It's a fine start.

I realize that the issue of recombinant DNA research is even more troublesome than it was in June of last year when we last met in San Francisco and talked about it. I was shocked then by the ugly tone of Sinsheimer's address to the American Society of Biological Chemists and by the warm response it received from an audience that should have been revolted by it.

In the interim it has become even clearer to me that what we now must fear most, is not the remote possibility of biological warfare, but instead the war on biology. If we succumb through weakness or confusion to the forces who are attacking scientific inquiry in the U.S., I am certain that the frontiers of genetic research will develop elsewhere (e.g., Soviet Union, China, Israel) and will provide a refuge for American scientists. This is a lesson from history that does not need to be learned painfully still again.

My best wishes for your efforts on behalf of reason and the national welfare.

Sincerely,

Arthur Kornberg