

Bldg. 10, Room 9N-119

April 22, 1970

Dr. Robb Moses
Harvard Medical School
Boston, Massachusetts 02115

Dear Robb:

Your query about Art Buchwald took me by surprise. I have no idea about any hidden identity of his.

I've been thinking about answering your long letter but that of course does you little good. In fact I over-committed myself to all sorts of things this spring and you as well as others have suffered (me too--exhaustion and dissatisfaction with not being at the bench).

We were of course terribly lucky with the manuscript--and I'm glad. There have been a spate of rather papers from Paris--half-baked with respect to data but with good ideas and probably right. It's nice to have the three papers with their really elegant data to counteract this (Chou & Moses). One of the papers has extensive data on the lag in polymerization with independent E. coli enzyme--overcoming it with miniscule amounts of primer. Actually they conclude that coli enzyme (even independent) has an absolute requirement for primer. On the face of it we seem to have switched places. Actually it was rather easy to demonstrate the same lag with both form-I and form-T using the new assay (remove ADP with charcoal and then use Ames phosphate method which increases sensitivity enormously and allows one to measure 5 and 10 nmoles of Pi per 50 μ liters of reaction with no trouble). In fact, this same lag was what was giving me trouble with my high s.a. ADP incorporation assay last spring when I tried to do the careful K_m values for ADP and Mg. At the time I ascribed the trouble to the assay but the lag was real. BUT--this lag is a phenomenon of insufficient free Mg^{2+} and disappears if the free Mg^{2+} is high enough. One can calculate from the Parisienne experiments that they were working at suboptimal free Mg^{2+} (using their own old data) so who knows what the lag means. One thing it does mean is that I can't do all those fancy K_m values. That's really fine with me since it's a bore at best.

You are, of course, at liberty to talk about phosphorylase. Do you have the slides you need?

Now to the main point. The word here is that jobs are scarce. Independent slots probably next to impossible. I assume you want some degree of independence at this point. But it would help me if you gave a clearer idea on your views vis-a-vis independence and further and feelings about what field you're interested in for an independent project.

It is my general impression that there are certain NIH spots which are not as tight as others and furthermore they may be the sort of situations where people would be very glad to have someone with your background. By and large I would not term these "independent" but they might be the sort of situations where within your own problem you might be essentially on your own. Several situations may be worth investigating. One is Salzman--one is the area of animal viruses (tumor viruses) and one is interferon. All of these do have the sort of clinical implications you mention. I'd be happy to do some phoning around if you'd like me to and then I'll report back in detail. Let me know. No rush--I leave Saturday (April 25) for three weeks (India) and will be back about May 15.

I had a visit in Chicago. Jim is really blooming--it was a pleasure to see.

All for now.

Best to Audrey.

Yours,

Maxine Singer

MS:vt