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EAB26/27

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National Institutes of Health
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Dear Marshall

It is quite a long time since we were in contact. Happy New Year!
I do hope all is well with you.

I am writing to give you a report on our use of the hybrid cell lines which you so kindly provided to me in 1986. You may recall that after I spoke to you at the Katchalski Conference in England and we arranged that we could use the brainstem-neuroblastoma hybrid cell lines which you had made and stored, we received these and they were worked on here jointly by Michael Hanley and myself, and also by a Hungarian lab. who are collaborating with us and send workers here for that purpose. Michael has been in touch with you since, but the time has come for me to summarise to you what has been found overall with them, since (a) we are about to write up results using those lines and (b) a question has arisen about a commercial organisation acquiring one of them, which I need your guidance on.

Two of the lines have been examined in detail, which we named BS1 and BS2 (BS = brain stem). These were freed from contaminating cells and the hybrid neurons were grown in permanent cultures, which have proved fully stable and monotypic. BS1 has no opioid receptors but does have some other receptors which are not yet well defined. BS2 has been characterised extensively; it has a variety of receptors on it, including bradykinin and NMDA. It has opioid receptors, kappa and delta. It also has constitutive voltage-activated Na^+ , K^+ and Ca^{2+} (monitored by Ba^{2+}) channels. (All of these results are mentioned here on a confidential basis.)

We intend to use these cells now in some final experiments prior to publication. I felt that at this stage I should summarise the joint results, and check with you about the publication. We would, of course, fully acknowledge you as the originator of the cells and send you manuscripts when submitted. I believe this is what was said at the time, but I want to check that you are quite happy about this or have any other wishes.

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Secondly, originally I sent you a letter (June 23, 1986) stating, as requested, that we would not pass on these cells or derivatives of them to anyone else without your agreement. I have not given

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them outside this Unit, other than to the Hungarian laboratory mentioned above - who cleared this with you in person at the time, and who are doing the work strictly in collaboration with myself and have in turn given the same guarantee. However, a US pharmaceutical company - following up on a contact they had with someone in this Unit - want to acquire BS2 for use in testing drugs on the NMDA (and perhaps other) receptors and for molecular biology on the NMDA receptor. This was not envisaged by myself when I got the cell lines from you, and I would like any such commercial development to be conducted in a proper manner, and after your agreement, on whatever terms are appropriate. Does NIH own the rights to the cells themselves? It is true that the recognition of the receptors on them was made here, so that MRC has an interest also, but since the cell line was created by you at NIH, I would be glad to receive advice on what would be required from your end, if we were to provide them in that context.

Very best wishes

E. R.