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MOUNT SINAI SCHOOL OF MEDICINE
of The City University of New York
FIFTH AVENUE AND 100TH STREET • NEW YORK, N.Y. 10029

Department of Community Medicine

July 10, 1975

Mr. Anthony Mazzocchi, Director
Citizenship-Legislative Department
Oil, Chemical and Atomic Workers
International Union
1126 16th Street, N.W.
Washington, D.C. 20036

Dear Tony:

Attached is a copy of my letter to Dr. Schneiderman with regard to the preliminary measures that are necessary before the human trials of the retinoids.

Although we are both quite urgent with regard to the use of prophylactic chemicals in this bad situation, I think we are equally convinced that, to the extent possible, necessary safety measures be sought at the outset.

I hope that the National Cancer Institute will provide the necessary resources for this. If not, then I think they ought to abandon research for prophylactic drugs, since similar measures would be necessary for almost anyone of them.

Sincerely your,

Irving J. Selikoff, M.D.
Professor

IJS:jlr
Enc.

for Tyler file
re NCI
Vitamin A program

June 20, 1975

Marvin Schneiderman, Ph.D.
AD, Field Studies and Statistics
National Cancer Institute
Bethesda, Maryland 20014

Dear Marvin:

Mike Sporn touched on a rather central issue, as he weaved twixt enthusiasm and frustration; that much has to be done as we approach the evaluation of the retinoids. Considered against the reluctance or inability of the Hoffman-LaRoche people to mount such studies, the question immediately arises whether they will be thought of, stimulated, supported by others. The question is even more important at the outset. If initial studies show promise, the bandwagon will hardly be big enough.

This, then, suggests -- almost before you start your protocol -- that an NCI commitment of at least modest extent should be known almost at once. Otherwise, I think it would be wrong for us to consider embarking on human trials.

Among the things we discussed, the following seemed important from this perspective:

1. Mutagenicity (and carcinogenicity!) of current and future compounds.

2. Body burden and retention in fat and solid organ tissues. Perhaps Hoffman-LaRoche could undertake some of this.

3. Interaction with other drugs. There are a surfeit of capable toxicologists who would be interested in this.

4. Effect of the drugs on body enzyme systems, using some of the more sophisticated techniques now available.

5. Establishment of animal models for the testing of the drugs in asbestos cancer. There are several labs that could mount such investigations right off.