December 28, 1951

Dr. James A. Baker
Virus Research Institute
New York State Veterinary College
Cornell University
Ithaca, New York

Dear Dr. Baker:

The paper by Dr. York and yourself which appeared in the June issue of the Journal of Experimental Medicine interested me greatly because of our search for an explanation for the development of antibodies against the Lansing virus in cows. The paper that has just appeared in the November issue of the Proceedings of the Society for Experimental Biology and Medicine by Chang and Werner disturbs me a good deal because the story smacks too much of a contamination of the so-called bovine encephalitis virus with Lansing virus, despite the various statements to the contrary that are made in the article. I am even wondering whether the bovine encephalitis virus may not be similar or closely related to the virus which you people have isolated from the stools of normal calves. I have not had an opportunity to study the original reports by McVitt and Harshfield, and so I don't know the evidence which would relate that particular virus to the clinical syndrome of encephalitis in bovines.

The real purpose of this letter is to ask you if, by chance, you may still have some of the sera of calves before they were infected with your virus (artificially or by contact) and after infection. I would be most interested to test such sera against the Lansing virus to determine whether or not there is any relationship between the appearance of antibodies for your intestinal virus and for the Lansing virus. I would also appreciate it very much if I might have two reprints of your excellent paper — one for myself and one for my associate, Dr. Winser.

We expect to do the experiment with poliomyelitis virus in calves sometime during June of 1952.

With all good wishes for the New Year,

Sincerely yours,

Albert B. Sabin, M. D.