Dear Dr. Sabin,

As you may know, plans are being made for the use in limited trial, of batches of formaldehyde treated poliomyelitis vaccine in this country in the near future.

The question of which strains should be incorporated in this vaccine is one on which we have been doing a certain amount of studying. I wondered whether you have any data on the behaviour of formaldehyde treated preparations of the attenuated strains which you have derived in your laboratory when tested as antigens. Some of us in this country believe that any strain to be used in such batches of vaccine as are likely to be used for children, should at all events in initial stages of the work, be composed of strains with minimal pathogenic potentiality for man.

I would be grateful if you could mail me such lines of representative strains from each type which you personally would consider to be of the least potential pathogenicity in man, in order that I might be able to try them out on these lines.

There is of course, at the present time, no question of using active virus preparations in this country, and the sole purpose of my using these strains at this time would be to prepare formaldehyde treated preparations and test their antigenicity.

I believe we, ourselves, may in some way be able to obtain strains of low virulence from British isolates. However, our resources do not permit us to carry out the elegant dissection of pathogenic spectrum which you have performed on the strains that you have carried in your laboratory. It is for this reason that I am asking you if you would be good enough to send us your strains.

Continued ........
If you still have reprints of your paper from the "Journal of Experimental Medicine" June 1954, on Experiment Segregation and Properties of Avirulent Variants, also the article from P.S.E.B.M. December 1954, on Poliomyelitis and other Enteric Viruses from Healthy American Children, I should be pleased to receive copies.

With kind regards,

Yours sincerely,

A.P. Goffe.