November 17, 1961

Dr. Joseph L. Meinhart
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Dear Joe:

This has reference to your memo to the Committee on Enteroviruses dated November 11, 1961 with an attached "Classification of Human Enteroviruses" which has now been submitted for publication to Virology. You state in the memo that this was "unanimously adopted at the meeting".

The vicissitudes of a chairman are great and I have the greatest sympathy for you in the problems connected with this document. I would like to point out, however, that to the best of my knowledge the "unanimous adoption" of this and instruction to the chairman to submit it for publication in Virology was unanimously adopted by those members of the committee present at the meeting, not present being Dr. Balfour, Dr. Enders, Dr. Sabin and Dr. Hanson, 50% of the membership. If you will recall, I was present for the afternoon session during which this was not discussed, and I had not seen the draft which was apparently approved prior to the meeting to be in a position to make any comment on it while there. If you have verbal or mail endorsement of the final form by the other three members when I did not see present at the meeting, there is no question about a majority approval. However, if you have approval of only 50% of the committee, or even a bare majority, it would seem to me improper to have this published as a committee document and to have it circulated to the International Committee as having come from the American Committee. This is very important principal, and unless I am in error on the assumptions and observations made above, I feel I should insist that this document be withdrawn until it has been properly cleared.

One of the questions I would certainly raise is in relation to the stabilization by "cations". I have not seen the data which show that essentially all, if not all, of the presently recognized enteroviruses meet this criterion. I would like to see such data prior to endorsing this with my name. You presented during the afternoon session of the meeting in Bethesda a very nice review of your published work and possibly some in addition, of the selective effects of magnesium chloride and calcium chloride on a picovirus and on SV40. This fourth criterion for an enterovirus was not present in any of the earlier drafts of this document. I am sure that others not present also have questions and I have only presented an example.

cc: Dr. Marvin M. Harris
    Dr. T. E. Boyd
    Dr. Gilbert Balfour
    Dr. John F. Enders
    Dr. Albert Sabin

Very sincerely yours,

W. Hub. Hanson, M.D.
Head of Department