

RB

IN CONFIDENCE

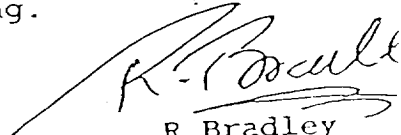
TRANSMISSION TO CHIMPANZEES

1. Kuru and CJD have been successfully transmitted to chimpanzees but scrapie and TME have not.
2. We cannot say that scrapie will not transmit to chimpanzees. There are several scrapie strains and I am not aware that all have been tried (that would have to be from mouse passaged material). Nor has a wide enough range of field isolates subsequently strain typed in mice been inoculated by the appropriate routes (i/c, i/p and i/v).
3. I believe the proposed experiment to determine transmissibility, if conducted, would only show the susceptibility or resistance of the chimpanzee to infection/disease by the routes used and the result could not be interpreted for the predictability of the susceptibility for man. Proposals for prolonged oral exposure of chimpanzees to milk from cattle were suggested a long while ago and rejected.
4. In view of Dr Gibbs' probable use of chimpanzees Mr Wells' comments (enclosed) are pertinent. I have yet to receive a direct communication from Dr Schellekers but before any collaboration or provision of material we should identify the Gibbs' proposals and objectives.
5. A positive result from a chimpanzee challenged severely would likely create alarm in some circles even if the result could not be interpreted for man. I have a view that all these agents could be transmitted provided a large enough dose by appropriate routes was given and the animals kept long enough. Until the mechanisms of the species barrier are more clearly understood it might be best to retain that hypothesis.

A negative result would take a lifetime to determine but that would be a shorter period than might be available for human exposure and it would still not answer the question regarding man's susceptibility. In the meantime no doubt the negativity would be used defensively. It would however be counterproductive if the experiment finally became positive. We may learn more about public reactions following next Monday's meeting.

CVO (+ Mr Wells' comments) ✓
 Dr T W A Little ✓
 Dr B J Shreeve ✓

25. 9


 R Bradley
 23 September 1990