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E.R.

You suggested that genetically engineered Factor VIII, may be the ultimate answer, because it would not carry the risks associated with human plasma, but this is very far from being a reality at the moment. Although it is being intensively researched, there is still a long way to go before it can even be estimated when such material might become available.

Perhaps I could also mention Government-funded research efforts into AIDS generally. May I reassure you that we are most concerned to fill the gaps in our knowledge of this disease. Only then shall we be able to make inroads into prevention and treatment. As I mentioned when we met, the Medical Research Council has established a Working Party to review scientific knowledge and research on AIDS in this country and abroad and to advise the Council accordingly. It will encourage contact and co-operation between research workers in this field and will also advise on grant applications for research on AIDS. The Council has, in fact, already awarded one such grant, under which a particular aspect of the depression of the immune system in homosexual males with AIDS and related disorders will be investigated. Other applications are under consideration.

I hope you will agree that the establishment by the Council of this group of eminent professionals provides the best hope of ensuring that centrally-funded research is soundly based scientifically and does not duplicate work being done elsewhere. We have of course much to learn from the experience of the United States in this field and any attempt to develop research in the UK must take full account of research being undertaken there. I understand that the Working Party will have this very much in mind, the Medical Research Council being in close touch with activities sponsored by the US National Institutes of Health.

A further, but somewhat different, aspect of centrally funded investigation into AIDS is the work being carried out by the Communicable Disease Surveillance Centre of the PHLS at Colindale. They have established a surveillance system to detect AIDS in the UK and to monitor trends in its incidence. This involves detailed notification of all individual cases of AIDS which will provide an invaluable data base for those undertaking research. The PHLS is represented on the MRC Working Party.

I hope this information will be of use to you and reassuring. I enjoyed our meeting and will look forward to maintaining our dialogue.

*Yours sincerely,*

GRO-C

THE LORD GLENARTHUR