BACK

A SHORTENED COMMENTARY ON MONTAGNIER'S 1983 *SCIENCE* PAPER

Note: the longer commentary with references is at

http://www.theperthgroup.com/Nobel/Montagnier1983Paper.pdf

First experiment

Lymphocytes from a gay man BRU were put in culture to which several chemicals were added.

Montagnier's findings

In the culture supernatant reverse transcription was detected.

Montagnier's interpretation

The reverse transcription was caused by a retroviral reverse transcriptase (hence he referred to it as "RT activity").
BRU was infected with a retrovirus.

Our comments

Reverse transcription is a process where DNA is synthesised from nucleotides using RNA as a template. (Retroviruses have RNA as their genome). Although Montagnier and Gallo and other experts consider detection of reverse transcription proof for the presence of a retrovirus, many others do not. This includes the discoverer of RT, David Baltimore. In fact in the early 1970s both Gallo and at least Barre-Sinoussi and JC Chermann were fully aware of the fact that reverse transcription is a cellular process.

Our conclusion

Montagnier had no scientific basis for his interpretation.

Second experiment

Lymphocytes from BRU were co-cultured with lymphocytes from a healthy blood donor. Again several chemicals were added.

Montagnier's findings

Reverse transcription.

Montagnier's interpretation

The retrovirus from BRU's cells was transmitted to the healthy blood donor's cells.

Our comments

Since RT activity can be found in all cells, the detection of this activity in two consecutive cultures, or even in an infinite number, cannot be considered proof of retroviral transmission.

Our conclusion

Montagnier had no scientific basis for his interpretation.

Third experiment

Umbilical cord blood lymphocytes were cultured with cell free supernatants obtained from the co-culture of the BRU and healthy blood donor cells.

Montagnier's findings

Part A

Electron micrographs of the supernatant showing budding (from the cell) and cell-free, retrovirus-like particles.

Montagnier's interpretation

The particles are retroviruses which originated from BRU's cells. "This virus is a typical type-C RNA tumor virus".

Our comments

According to HIV experts, including Montagnier, HIV is a lentivirus. Type-C RNA tumor viruses belong to a different family of retroviruses. Hence in 1983 Montagnier did not discover HIV.

Retrovirus-like particles can appear in cultures, especially under the conditions used by Montagnier, but they are not viruses. Before the AIDS era there was ample evidence that retrovirus-like particles are present in the majority of human placentas. Even in the AIDS era evidence has been published demonstrating such particles in umbilical cord blood lymphocytes.

Montagnier had no controls, that is, umbilical cord blood lymphocytes cultured with supernatant originating from cultures which did not contain cells from AIDS patients.

According to all HIV experts, including Montagnier, Moore, Gallo, for cell free particles to be infectious, it is absolutely necessary for the particles to have knobs (spikes) on their surface. Neither Montagnier's particles, nor any other particles in the published scientific literature and claimed to be HIV, have such knobs. (This includes the EM Montagnier showed in his Nobel lecture). In fact in 2003 Kuznetsov, using the most modern of all techniques, atomic force microscopy, reported "the spikes observed by negative-staining electron microscopy may be an artifact of the penetration of heavy metal stain between envelope proteins. Indeed, the term "spike" appears to have assumed a rather imprecise, possibly misleading definition, and might best be used with caution". Since the umbilical cord blood lymphocytes were cultured with cell free supernatant from the co-culture, the particles, even if they were retroviruses, could not have originated from the co-culture containing BRU's and the healthy blood donor's lymphocytes.

Our conclusion

Montagnier has no scientific basis for his interpretation.

Third experiment

Part B

Virologists, molecular biologists and HIV experts including Montagnier and Gallo (the latter testifying in a South Australian court case in 2007), as well as a virology textbook submitted by the prosecution at this case, claim that to prove the existence of a new retrovirus the particles must be purified and shown to contain unique proteins and RNA.

Montagnier's findings
Montagnier took the culture supernatant (cell free fluids) and centrifuged it at very high speeds through a sucrose density gradient. This is laboratory procedure used to purify retroviral particles based on their density. In such a gradient retrovirus particles (RVPs) aggregate (concentrate="band") in the sucrose solution where the density reaches 1.16 g/ml.
At the 1.16 g/ml density band Montagnier found RT activity and three proteins, p80, p45 (now known as p41) and p25 (now known as p24) all of which reacted with antibodies in BRU's blood serum. The p24 protein did not react with antibodies to HTLV-I, a retrovirus discovered by Gallo in 1980, the "first" human retrovirus.

Montagnier's interpretation
The 1.16 g/ml material is purified retrovirus particles, HIV.
One of the proteins, p24, is an HIV protein.
The virus is a new retrovirus.
The other two proteins are not HIV proteins, they are cellular proteins. p45/41 is the ubiquitous cellular protein actin.
The antibody which reacted with p24 is an HIV antibody and thus proved BRU was infected. In other words, his patient was infected with a new retrovirus now known as HIV.
No mention is made about what caused BRU to have antibodies that reacted with p45/41 and p80.

Our comments
All retrovirologists accept that non-virus material, such as cellular debris can also band at 1.16 g/ml. This is the reason why purification cannot be proven without an EM to show (i) RVPs are present; (ii) there is nothing but RVP present. This was in fact stressed by Barre-Sinoussi and JC Chermann ten years before they claimed to have discovered HIV.

Montagnier and Barre-Sinoussi did not publish an EM of the material banding at 1.16 g/ml and yet claimed their material was "purified virus".

There are no viruses constituted with one protein.

BRU had many "non-HIV" infections and thus antibodies to these agents. It is now known that patients said to be infected with HIV have elevated levels of antibodies in general. Any or all of such antibodies could have reacted with p24 and the two proteins. There is ample evidence antibodies are not monogamous.

Our conclusion
Montagnier has no scientific basis for his interpretation. Nonetheless, like the word of God, the word of Montagnier was accepted by everybody, including the Nobel committee, as the first purification of a new retrovirus and thus proof for the existence of HIV.

EVENTS IN 1997
Researchers from France, Germany and the US realised that, although the proteins used in the HIV antibody tests and the cDNA (DNA complementary to the alleged "viral RNA") used for PCR studies, were said to have originated from "purified virus", up till that time nobody had published evidence for HIV purification. They went to great efforts

to purify HIV and their results proved beyond any doubt no such purification exists. In electron microscope (EM) pictures published by the Franco/German collaboration a few particles are labelled “HIV” but the vast majority of particles are cellular microvesicles (debris). So much so that the caption reads “purified microvesicles”, not “purified HIV”. The situation in similar the US study.

In both sets of EMs none of the particles designated “HIV” have all the morphological characteristics attributed to HIV. In fact in the US study the particles are twice the size of all known retrovirus particles. In both studies no particles have knobs. Most importantly, the proteins present at the 1.16 g/ml band obtained from the “HIV infected” supernatant, and the 1.16 g/ml band derived from a non-infected supernatant, have only quantitative differences. That is, apart from their relative amounts, both “HIV infected” and non-infected material contain identical proteins. Since the non-infected material is cellular proteins, “HIV” contains the same proteins as cells. Hence, all the material in the “infected” supernatant material is cellular, including the particles designated “HIV”.

Hence, not only are the “HIV” particles not pure, they cannot be viruses because there must be a difference between the proteins present in the two bands.

In July 1997, in an interview he gave to Djamel Tahi, Montagnier admitted that, although in 1983 he called the 1.16 g/ml band “purified virus” and thus proved the existence of HIV, in that material there were no retrovirus-like particles. He was able to make this statement because, although he did not publish EMs of “purified virus” in 1983, in 1983 he did obtain EMs of his “purified virus”. Since, according to Montagnier (a) to prove the existence of a new retrovirus purification is absolutely necessary, (b) according to his own admission he did not purify HIV, “I repeat, we did not purify”; the inescapable conclusion is that in 1983 Montagnier did not prove the existence of a new retrovirus HIV.

To quote dissident Paul Philpott "I think a very convincing case can be made against the HIV model. It's just that the points that really do refute the HIV model have not been taken up as the principal weapons of our most visible advocates." Any scientist of any persuasion acquainted with these data must question the evidence for the existence of HIV. See http://www.theperthgroup.com/POPPAPERS/lastdebate.html

BACK