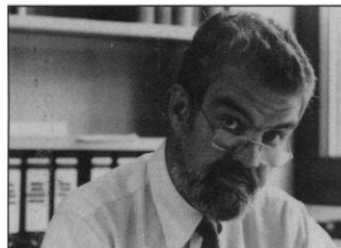


Gene Entrepreneur Looks to Europe

Frederick Bourke, the entrepreneur who was at least partly responsible for James Watson's resignation as head of the genome effort at NIH, still plans to launch his controversial private DNA sequencing company—provided he can land a big-name scientist as CEO. And that name may now be Lennart Philipson, director of the European Molecular Biology Laboratory (EMBL) in Heidelberg, Germany.

Bourke earlier failed to snare Robert Waterston of Washington University and John Sulston of Britain's Medical Research Council (see p. 958) for his venture—and his attempts to do so touched off a well-publicized tiff with Watson (*Science*, 7 February, p. 677), which did not sit well with



Lennart Philipson

Watson's boss, NIH Director Bernadine Healy.

Philipson, a molecular biologist who has set up one of the largest sequencing outfits in the world under William Ansorge at EMBL, would be a major catch. As *Science* went to press, Bourke and Philipson were said to be talk-

ing quite seriously. If Philipson takes the job, sources say, then Bourke might shift the new venture from Seattle to the East Coast. His original aim was to be close to his adviser, Leroy Hood, who has recently joined the University of Washington.

But if Bourke, who owns some 20 companies, can't snare Philipson or someone of equal stature, then all plans are off. As Bourke told *Science* several months ago, "I won't do it unless I hire the best people in the world."

Diplomacy and the AIDS Blood Test

Prompted by the discovery that Robert Gallo's AIDS isolate is virtually identical to Luc Montagnier's, officials in the French government have been threatening to reopen the 1987 patent agreement with the United States that divided royalties from the AIDS blood test 50-50. Last week, French Minister of Research and Space Hubert Curien and French Ambassador Jacques Andreani came to Washington to explain to White House science adviser D. Allan Bromley why they believe facts uncovered during NIH's Gallo investigation invalidate that split. But the meeting seems to have done little good: Those involved cannot agree even on what happened in the talks.

After the meeting, Curien was reported by the press to have said that Bromley agreed that the 1987 settlement was "lapsed" and that

Baltimore's Changing Travel Plans

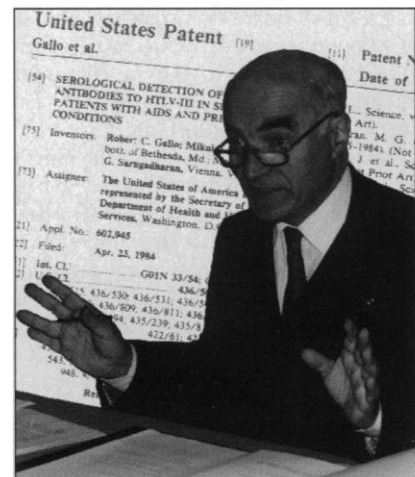
Cancel the flowers and champagne; the negotiations between Nobel-Prize-winning biologist David Baltimore and the Memorial Sloan-Kettering Cancer Center are off. Neither side will discuss what happened, but both said quite firmly last week that Baltimore—until last December president of Rockefeller University and now on its faculty—will not be moving to new digs at Sloan-Kettering, as recently reported in this column (*Science*, 1 May, p. 603.)

According to a colleague, "a number of" other institutions are courting Baltimore, with MIT's biology department being one of his most ardent suitors. Baltimore declined to comment on his prospects, other than to say that moving to MIT would be "the most likely possibility" for him. A phone message left for MIT biology chairman Phillip Sharp produced no response, so stay tuned for more.

the parties should begin talks in the next few weeks. In response, however, Bromley's office quickly fired off a statement saying that last week's "discussions did not cover the validity of the 1987 agreement"—a diplomatic triumph considering that all agree that the patent was discussed.

Indeed, contacted by *Science*, Michael Astrue, the top attorney for the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), said he is unhappy that Curien and Bromley even discussed the patent issue, pointing out that the report on the Gallo investigation has not gained final approval from HHS. Astrue added that he had debriefed Bromley after the talk and is certain that Curien misquoted the president's science adviser.

With little harmony in evi-



Diplomatic showdown. Hubert Curien and the controversial patent.

dence, French Embassy official Pacal Chevit says that if this latest round of diplomacy fails, the matter will be settled in court. Retorts Astrue, since there has been no evidence of fraud in the patent, he doubts the French have any legal grounds to force a change.

Healy Throws Some Light on the Gallo Investigation

After two-and-a-half years enduring peer judgment out of the public eye, Robert Gallo will now be assessed by yet another scientific panel, but this time in the light of day.

NIH Director Bernadine Healy told journalists last month (*Science*, 24 April, p. 226) that she wanted to bring the allegations that have swirled around the laboratory of the world's most famous AIDS researcher out into the open. Now, it seems, Healy will be as good as her word: Nobel Prize-winning biologist Howard Temin from the University of Wisconsin will be asked to chair a subcommittee of the National Cancer Advisory Board charged with recommending how, or if, Gallo should be disciplined for actions revealed in the NIH Office of Scientific Integrity's (OSI) final report on its Gallo investigation (*Science*, 8 May, p. 735). And under government "sunshine" laws, the panel's activities should be open to public scrutiny.

One of Healy's primary goals, she told *Science*, is to satisfy those who have complained about the secretive aspects of the probe and think that

NIH has given special treatment to one of its star researchers. But she may not have solved that last problem. Although Healy hopes that Temin will bring prestige and credibility to the investigation, critics are likely to point out that Temin has through the years been a frequent and sympathetic adviser to Gallo.

One of those critics is bound to be John Dingell (D-MI). Dingell recently issued a press statement suggesting that NIH bungled the affair as proved by Healy herself at the same meeting of science writers. There, Dingell noted based on a *Science* account, Healy publicly acknowledged that OSI's report did not address the "big issues" in the Gallo case—whether he stole the virus, shared reagents, or gave appropriate credit to French scientists. But a closer reading of a transcript of the event shows that *Science*'s account was not precise: Healy was merely saying that those "big issues" were "the questions that the American public wants to know [about]." Hence, her decision to bring sunshine into this affair.