October 2, 1979

T. van Es, Ph.D.
Department of Biochemistry
P.O. Box 1059
Piscataway, New Jersey 08854

Dear Dr. van Es:

I am writing in response to your request for a letter of reference for Dr. George Pieczenik.

I have known Dr. Pieczenik since 1971 when I met him at the Medical Research Council's Laboratory of Molecular Biology in Cambridge, England. He quickly distinguished himself as a scientist of unusual promise together with exceptional personal qualities. I would like to document several points.

First, Dr. Pieczenik has one of the finest minds that I have come across. This is characterized by tremendous imagination as well as a seasoned theoretical physics and mathematics ability; this has shown up in a number of important works and papers of which only a few have been yet published. For example, I credit Dr. Pieczenik with the first, public, proposal (at the MRC) for the development of monoclonal antibodies - a technique later developed by others which has been shown to be of paramount importance and likely to be as significant in biology as are DNA recombinant techniques. His theories and explanations on the genetic (overlapping) code, sequence organization and origin of the code have far ranging implications of which only a small amount is appreciated today. He was first to appreciate that the analysis of sequence information using computer methods together with a linguistic approach was going to result in a real understanding of the large mass of sequence data that is being generated, but not interpreted, by other laboratories. I have no doubt that other ideas and their development will continue and a few will likely be extraordinary in importance.

Second, I feel that Dr. Pieczenik is an excellent teacher. I have talked to his students and one quickly notices how well prepared they are as well as the quality of their questions; I am sure a large fraction of this is due to his efforts. I have noticed the care that he gives to preparation of his lectures for his classes, as well as the unusually clear explanations he has given me on some theoretical point.

Third, I have come to admire Dr. Pieczenik as a person with rare human qualities. He is terribly honest with the courage to publically state
exactly how he feels as well as back them with valid reasons. It is exactly this type of scientist that will have an increasing impact on the scientific world as many of the issues today are of social concern. I have found that Dr. Pieczenik is very knowledgeable in many areas other than science and this comes through in conversation and discussions at many levels.

In summary, I feel that Dr. Pieczenik has all the qualities that make for a first rate scientist and scholar. He has published and contributed such to make a major impact. He is a scientist of national (and in some areas international) stature. Rutgers University is fortunate to have a person such as him on their faculty. I rank Dr. Pieczenik at the top with respect to other young scientists.

Sincerely,

John W. Sedat
Assistant Professor

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