

## IA-LIKE ANTIGENS IN LEPROSY

Sir,

Indira Nath in her review of the Immunology of Leprosy<sup>1</sup> states that 'Ridley, using formalin fixed tissues which may destroy [Ia-like] antigens, reported contradictory results showing a selective absence of [these] antigens on macrophages of lepromatous lesions.' We would point out that we did not use formalin fixative, but a fixative which is optimal for the preservation of antigens.<sup>2</sup> We did not suggest that the dendritic-type cells we observed were macrophages, nor did we claim to present the whole population of cells which can be shown to be Ia positive using cryostat material. Thus our results are complementary, not contradictory, to those of other workers. But we think the selectivity of our system has produced a significant result which has been missed by less selective systems.

MARIAN J RIDLEY and D S RIDLEY

*Hospital for Tropical Diseases*  
*4 St Pancras Way, London NW1 0PE*

### References

- Nath I. Immunology of human leprosy current status. *Lepr Rev* 1983; (special issue) 31S–45S.  
Ridley MJ, Ridley DS. Unique expression of HLA-DR (Ia-like) antigen in the lesions of polar tuberculoid leprosy. *Lepr Rev* 1982; **53**: 249–52.