

[Microbial Genetics]

August 1, 1955

Dr. Abraham White  
Albert Einstein College of Medicine  
1710 Newport Avenue  
New York 61, N.Y.

Dear Dr. White:

I have just received your letter of July 29, and feel that I owe you the courtesy of an immediate acknowledgment if I cannot give a considered reply. Your suggestion that I consider, and be considered for, the position in your bacteriology department has so many implications that I would not want to give an offhand answer even at this preliminary stage; it would be a wasteful burden to both of us even to begin fruitless discussions.

Unfortunately, while I was east in May and in June, Indramanther tied down by other commitments, and had not planned to make any other trips during the next few weeks. If I can complete my backlog of writing and squeeze in one or two other journeys already committed, I might manage it some time after mid-September, or sooner if extremely urgent.

It is impossible not to admire the zeal with which the vision of this new college has been fired, and the consequent success of its accomplishment. The most intriguing aspect of the appointment in microbiology would be the opportunity to bring a spirit in the teaching of the subject that was sadly lacking, I fear, in my own experience as a medical student at Columbia. However my experience so far has been almost exclusively in research rather than teaching and administration, and I would be the first to want to scrutinize my qualifications for the added responsibility. It would be of some help if I could learn, in general terms, just what the scope of the department would be— what the anticipated staff would encompass; who, if anyone already holds an appointment in the department; the extent of research support from the College. I realize these are the kinds of question that could be explored better in personal conversation, but it might help my bearings to have some information — the counterpart of the vital summary enclosed. By the way, you can probably get a more complete dossier with photo, etc., from the News Bureau of this university.

With best regards,

Yours sincerely,

Joshua Lederberg

Professor of Genetics