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Department of Medical Genetics

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Dear Jim:

I can see there is a lot of collective head-scratching about Esther. I don't believe that it matters a great deal whether her salary appears on the budget from regular University funds or from outside, or am I mistaken. That is, would one type of appointment carry any privileges, responsibilities or sense of tenure lacking in the other? If not, then I would leave the arrangements at this level to the convenience of the University.

The departmental arrangements are, I gather, still under discussion. Without knowing why 'Soils and Plant Nutrition' is better now than 'Agricultural Biochemistry' it is hard to give a considered opinion. It is, however, a good deal harder to see how Esther's line of work would be justifiable under a title of Soils and Plant Nutrition.

All of this leads me again to ask whether the chances for your first suggestion, of a straightforward 'variance' from the President's office to allow Esther's employment in the Department of Genetics, have been properly exhausted, or merely deflected to see whether there were other equally congenial solutions. Did the President say "no"? It is becoming fairly clear that the other possibilities all have an element of ambiguity. We would be quite content if recommendations for salary, etc. were processed by the Chairman of Genetics; if it would facilitate that, then perhaps the budgeting on University funds would be the better.

If this approach is quite blocked (and I can't tell from your letters whether it is or not) then we will have to resume discussion of the current ones. If another department must be brought in, Bacteriology (depending on Seymour's future plans) or Virus Research would seem the most rational; if it must be in the College of Agriculture, I would have thought the faculty in Agr. Biochemistry would have the best understanding of her work. It is hard for me to believe that the inter-departmental arrangement could remain indefinitely a pure formality, without that understanding. But I suppose if she actually had a title "Research Associate [or whatever] in Genetics administered in the Department of) it would go, if it had to.

I would actually prefer that Esther's remuneration be set according to local standards. She has been working at fulltime research since her Ph.D. degree in 1950; you can extract the titles of her papers (marked EML) from the joint list you already have. Her work on the genetics of lysogenicity

(Paper 32) has had a decisive impact on the phage world, and the lambda system is now one of the most widely studied in that field. She also had a primary part in the work represented by papers #30, 54 and 58, and was an indispensable collaborator, to say the least, on the others of joint authorship. She has also had much to do with the tooling-up for many other studies where she does not appear as an author.

annual/
Her salary for 1956-57 has been \$5000, for a calendar year (i.e. 11 mo. + 1 mo. vacation) appointment. We have an informal understanding that she will be advanced in three or four steps to a plateau of about \$6500, with further adjustments on an inflationary basis. This is probably well below the California standards for comparable experience and performance, but this is not a subject that either of us feel should be left to our own judgement, if it can be helped.

Are you just back to old stationery, or are you a 'division' again?

Allen G. Marr from the Davis-Bact. department was visiting yesterday, and mentioned a promotional campaign to get a position in microbial genetics budgeted for that campus, if not in Genetics then in Bacteriology. Have you heard about that yet?

Yours sincerely,

Joshua Lederberg