

Genetics

Madison
September 17, 1958

To: Dean Alway

Dear Bob:

Our visit was both necessary and reasonably successful, especially as regards laboratory planning problems. There are some real headaches, but we should find the means to solve them. Our visit was also pleasant, thanks in good part to your vicarious hospitality.

Godspeed on your staff decisions!

I have better reason than ever to think that Barton Childs would be inducible. If Gellus proves too diffident, I wouldn't altogether exclude Childs as a candidate for the chair. On the whole, I think the ~~simplest~~ neatest arrangement for him would be a non-executive professorship in the department. I am relying on your own once expressed interest and confidence in Childs to motivate a well-timed broaching of the question to Gellus; at least I hope I haven't projected my own enthusiasm too far in this direction. All I have heard about the Pediatrics situation is quite reassuring about the temperateness of the committee's decision, and I hope you will understand my own initial diffidence as inexperience.

I may be quoting tales told too soon out of school, but Milt Johnson hinted quite discreetly that you might be looking for a suitable temporary and not too expensive use of space that Obstetrics may not be able to use to full advantage on the third floor. I hasten to suggest that Genetics is glad to stand in line for the chance to offer its qualifications; part of the area should do very well, at minimum costs, for the non-laboratory type of activity contemplated for appointments II and III in Genetics-- e.g. computing space; blood typing; animal room; fruitfly-lab (which is hardly a lab at all)....

For the moment, anyhow, Crow is decided on staying here at Madison, but I think the odds are even he might change his mind in six or eight months. But we are thinking seriously of other alternatives. Mitchison wants about the same time to think it over. But ditto. It goes without saying our whole setup will be more attractive if we can improve consolidation of our quarters, say along the lines of the previous paragraph. I know you have other considerations to sort out: that's way I'm stating these explicitly.

I hope the door isn't altogether shut against the possibility of our moving to Stanford in February (with same arrangements as now pending in re Pavia). This will depend partly on whether there might still be some temporary space for us in Biophysics, which is one reason we hope Henry Kaplan does visit us here on the 30th. Some while ago you indicated we could have it either way as far as your office was concerned: it would be reassuring to know that this remained so. There are difficulties either way, and we are re-evaluating which is better.

The enclosed represents Esther's raincheck in lieu of last May. She saved some cash for Stanford by coming 'family plan' on my site visit trip to Berkeley-- you can see we are learning the lurks of a private institution.

Our visit did not lessen our sense of anticipation-- we can't wait.

Yours sincerely,

Joshua Lederberg