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UNIVERSITY of PENNSYLVANIA

PHILADELPHIA 4

The School of Medicine

DEPARTMENT OF BIOCHEMISTRY
327 Anatomy Chemistry Bldg.

January 30, 1963

Dr. Joshua Lederberg
Department of Genetics
Stanford University Medical Center
Palo Alto, California

Dear Josh:

There were a few students of mine in Comparative Biochemistry who might fill your requirements. One of these is Bruce Levenberg, now at the University of Michigan at Ann Arbor. He obtained his degree with Buchanan at MIT, worked with Kaufman at NIH, and has more recently discovered some odd compounds and enzymes in mushrooms, etc. at Michigan. He has recently described a phenylhydrazide and a unique carbamyl phosphate synthetase and appears to be more nonconformist than most. In any case, he recognizes the gold mine available when one steps off the well-worn fashionable paths. Perhaps he will be interested in your post.

Cohen

In your letter to me, which I take as an indirect comment on my essay, you have underlined "the underlying unity of terrestrial and cosmic life". I just don't know what you are talking about; perhaps you would care to define this term. You may conceivably be right about terrestrial life, though I don't consider the evidence overwhelming if you are referring to a monophyletic path of evolution, but if you toss in "cosmic life" as well, I would suggest that you are extrapolating without any evidence whatever. You might be right, anyway, and it certainly is easier to look for terrestrial life everywhere. However, I would imagine that the nature of the assumptions used in designing the gadgetry ought to be looked at pretty closely and not accepted on faith. Perhaps I am misinterpreting that phrase, however; if so, I would really like to know what it means to you.

Anyway, the job sounds like fun and I wish I were involved in it a bit myself.

With best regards, I remain

Sincerely yours,

Seymour

Seymour S. Cohen

SSC:db