

UNIVERSITY of PENNSYLVANIA

PHILADELPHIA 4

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The College
Division of Biology

January 29, 1958

Dr. Joshua Lederberg
Department of Medical Genetics
University of Wisconsin
Madison 6, Wisconsin

Dear Josh:

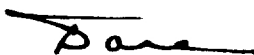
I have your memorandum and I am willing to circulate it to the members of the Botanical Section, but I am doubtful that this method will be effective. The nature of the Academy's structure and operation is such that the members of the Section can bring no influence to bear on the Academy except at an annual meeting, and this would mean nearly May first. Only one member of the Section is a member of the Council, Dr. W. J. Robbins.

I would propose an alternate procedure, and that is that you try to interest a few members of the Academy, not necessarily limited to our Section, who would join you in this statement or a similar one. Off-hand, I think of Beadle, Delbruck, Tatum, Van Niel, Colin MacLeod, and yourself. If a group of you were to send a statement to each member of the Academy Council, you might have some impact on them. Further, as individuals, there is no reason that your statement should not go to Dr. Kaplan, who is chairman of the Geophysical Year, and to the person in the Defense Department who is coordinator of the rocket programs.

Is there one?

I will not do anything until I hear from you as to how you will proceed, but I hardly believe that circulating the Botanical Section will produce the results in which you are interested. We will hold the copies of your statement here until I have your advice.

With best regards,



David R. Goddard

DRG/rwp

Dear Dave: I thank you for your advice. I decided to write directly to the members of the Council; looking at who they are, they should be in about as good a position as the people on your list to judge the cogency of the proposal (to set up an ad hoc committee to review the problem of contamination >>which might be radiochemical as well as microbiological>>). I see no harm, and some benefit in also distributing the memo to the section so there can be some forethought among the scientists who may be asked to offer their suggestions for action.

Josh