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HOLLIS S. INGRAHAM, M. D.  
COMMISSIONER

STATE OF NEW YORK  
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH

DIVISION OF LABORATORIES  
AND RESEARCH  
NEW SCOTLAND AVENUE

ALBANY 1, NEW YORK  
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CABLE ADDRESS "LABORATORY"

Airmail

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

Dear Doctor Lederberg:

I am writing to ask you if you would care to give your advice and comment upon a project in which I have been invited to participate. This concerns a micrometeorite collecting program which is underway under the supervision of Dr. Curtis Hemenway, of the Dudley Observatory here in Albany. His program involves various collecting techniques for micrometeorites using balloons and rockets and is due to participate in the next manned space craft program.

The point at which I would come into this program is to supply the biological facilities and additional collecting procedures required for tests to determine whether any of the micrometeorites collected might be biologically viable. We are in a strong position here for available techniques for detecting and determining the nature of ordinary microorganisms including viruses and could, of course, set up special culture conditions if it seemed feasible that unusual organisms might be encountered which could require special environments.

My main questions stem from the fact that I am a relative newcomer to this field, no doubt in a way like everyone else, but I would like to find out more about the degree of sophistication which this field has gained and how much work has already been done, assuming that it is published and readily available. Also, it would be of interest to know what similar programs are under way.

Any information you can give and suggestions you may care to make concerning current and previous work and any bibliography that you can supply will be very much appreciated.

Yours sincerely,

*John Hotchin*

John Hotchin, M.D.  
Assistant Director

JH/dj  
cc: Dr. C. Hemenway