

MINISTÈRE DE L'ÉDUCATION NATIONALE

CENTRE NATIONAL DE LA
RECHERCHE SCIENTIFIQUE

LABORATOIRE DE GÉNÉTIQUE
PHYSIOLOGIQUE

GIF-SUR-YVETTE (SEINE-ET-OISE)

TÉL. : 928-5136

September 22, 1961

Dear Josh,

Both Boris and I were pleased to have your kind letter. We, too, are looking forward to many contacts with our American friends. You are, of course, quite right that this is a big move for us, made in the face of many conflicting feelings. We are, however, confident that we shall be happy in our new setting, for it has many very attractive features, one of the most important being that it is a new and ambitious undertaking in biology. For a number of years at least, we shall also be very much tied to France, and this makes our decision less irrevocable.

I had heard that you are busy with subtilis, and am, of course, interested to have direct news of some of the things going on in your laboratory. In 1959, when I was at Cal Tech, Ron Rolfe and I succeeded in fractionating pneumococcal DNA by density gradient centrifugation. We have a paper coming out on our work this month in the P.N.A.S.. We could not carry it as far as we had hoped, but nonetheless, accomplished a fair bit, especially with respect to the handling of the data. I would see that you get a copy of the manuscript but for the fact that you will have the issue in hand before I could have a copy made. I shall look forward to seeing your results with subtilis markers.

I have been preparing for about a year a Meselson-Weigle type of experiment to trace the fate of the atoms of acquired DNA. I started by doing the controls and have run onto a very exciting result, showing that normal DNA (not isotopically heavy) undergoes regular and recognizable density changes, as well as molecular weight changes, during cell division. I hope to have this well worked out by the time I move, and be also well into the experiments with the heavy isotopes. I have a good group this year, and they are helping very much in compensating for the time I shall lose in preparing our move. I have a manuscript in press in the Journal de Chimie Physique on this and other matters, which should appear in October or November.

Boris will be doing tissue culture exclusively, at least at first.

Anne will be trying to switch over to an English pronunciation of her ABC.

ALICE M. WOODS, 1971
SUNSHINE DRIVE, TORONTO, ONT. M6R 1A5

So we'll all be busy, come the move, but happy to see you, even on short notice.

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All join in sending our best to you and Esther.

Yours,

Harriett

P.S. I have never worked on H₂O₂ effects on DNA. Zamennof tried to repeat McCarty's experiments, and failed to obtain reversal with SH groups. Labarjet has done some on H₂O₂ inactivation of transforming DNA. It inactivates, but is not as effective as other peroxides. I do not believe that he has tried reversal. I do not believe that McCarty made a trivial mistake. It would be interesting to know more about it. Perhaps Hotchkiss has looked into it.