January 16, 1959

Dr. C. F. Robinow
Bacteriology Laboratory
University of Western Ontario
Victoria Hospital
London, Ontario, Canada

Dear Carl:

Thank you so very much for your expansive letter of the 12th. I am afraid we are so enmeshed in packing that this is not the time for a considered answer to some of your questions, but I can assure you that I find your comments most useful and will certainly keep them in mind as we proceed with our work. Your letter did arrive just in time for me to discuss it with Dr. Blackwood and she will doubtless make contact with you if she decides to enter into this particular field for her fellowship in England.

I am sure that I do not know how to interpret the figures we already have on fertilization and we will certainly keep an open mind and a look out for the structures you suggest. The main catch is that we probably have to reconcile ourselves with Jacob's picture of progressive transfer and this may mean that the fertilization nucleus is completely unraveled into a single linear and extended strand in the course of fertilization. Conceivably such a strand may be quite invisible.

I am afraid I can't tell you anything from present data about the chromatin of the donor cells. All I can say is that these cells are usually still viable, presumably relying on the residual nuclei that have not been involved in fertilization.

Since you mentioned that you had sent duplicates of your papers on mucor to Stanford, I have given these to Dr. Blackwood, for which she is most grateful. You certainly do furnish us with a puzzle to understand the regularity of distribution of genetic material by the nuclear mechanisms that you see. However, as you have already taken pains to point out, the protozoa already furnish equally difficult and inescapable problems.

As usual, your photographs are magnificent.

Yours sincerely,

Joshua Lederberg
Professor

JL/ew

Robinow, C.F.