

April 25, 1960

Dr. Sydney Rubbo
Department of Bacteriology
University of Melbourne
Parkville N.2.
Victoria, Australia

Dear Syd:

It was good to hear the news from you. Esther did give her paper in London; I found it possible to accompany her too. We're just back now.

About sterility precautions for exobiology, I am sending a paper that I gave at Nice on the general subject. We have been thinking of ethylene oxide as the work horse for the job, and heat and radiation for special sealed components. Dr. Charles Phillips, (Division of Physical Defense, Fort Detrick, Frederick, Maryland) is in charge of the basic testing and procedures and I suggest you write to him for details. The Russians have stated flatly that they have decontaminated Lunik with a powerful disinfectant but efforts to get any details have been unavailing so far. You might profitably write yourself to Dr. Nicolai D. Jerusalimsky (Academy of Sciences, USSR, B. Jaluzhskaya ul., 33, Moscow, USSR) whose name has been identified with their program. I am hoping we might go over the whole matter at some international conference. Might you be an Australian delegate? Who else? (Except that the Space Science Board did pass on a note of inquiry from Neville Stanley). I don't think there is anything else to dig up in this country at present: our space agency has only recently set up an office for biological study: Clark Randt is directing it.

What do you think about back-contamination as a problem and how to cope with it?

We are doing a little work here, mainly trying to automate a UV-microscope-television system.

We are counting (hopefully) on being here end-July and look forward to seeing you. Let us know your plane arrival and we will try to meet it; I know you have other friends here but save some time for us too. We might talk about 1963 then too.

All the best.

As ever,

Joshua Lederberg

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