

April 14, 1970

The Hon. Gordon Allott
United States Senator
Senate Office Building
Washington, D. C.

Dear Senator Allott:

Thank you for your letter of April 9.

You were kind enough to express your interest in my views on "the likely contours of our emerging society" and "the sort of policy questions we in Washington...should be--facing".

The main vehicle that, fortunately, has been available to me for this purpose is a column that appears weekly in The Washington Post, and I will be glad to send a few sets from time to time that appear to correspond to the interest you express. In addition, I am preparing a paper for a forthcoming meeting of the American Psychiatric Association that I hope may deal more comprehensively with such issues, and I will be pleased to take the opportunity to send you a copy when it is drafted.

I must say that you set me a difficult standard by your own addresses that I have been reading with very great interest in the Congressional Record during the last few weeks.

What I am going to try to do in my A.P.A. article is take up the question of "technological injury" from a non-polemical standpoint, keeping in mind that new knowledge and techniques are being introduced at a very rapid pace into a real, not our ideal, society. It is only fairly recently that I have looked at the question in just this way, having spent most of my life in the most urgent advocacy of knowledge for its own sake. It is perhaps the grave potential for abuse of my own contributions to the fundamental biology of microorganisms that has given me some pause in this matter. Most of the problems that I perceive in the abuse of technological advance still seem to me to follow from too little, rather than too much, knowledge and understanding.

Sincerely yours,

Joshua Lederberg
Professor of Genetics

SEN.

GORDON

ALLOTT