

507 Eugenia Avenue
Madison 5, Wisconsin

June 18, 1957

Dr. A. D. Hershey
Biological Laboratories
Cold Spring Harbor, L.I., N.Y.

Dear Al:

I am writing this on personal stationery to emphasize the informal context of what has to be said.

Several of us at Wisconsin have thought that it would be a wonderful thing for the university if you could be enticed to join our faculty. This concept has been very enthusiastically seconded by a great many of our friends and colleagues, and there remain just two hurdles: the practical means of supporting a concrete proposal, and convincing you of its merit.

We have gone just far enough on the first of these that I thought it important to communicate with you, before you heard about it anyhow, probably distortedly, through the grapevine.

The occasion of our present hopes is the release of half of my own salary by my move from the Department of Genetics in the School of Agriculture, to a new Department of Medical Genetics in the School of Medicine. I am keeping a half-time appointment in Genetics as one means of maintaining the very close liaison in the programs of the two departments. The Genetics Department has unanimously voted a commitment of these funds towards a proposal for yourself, and is actively seeking the balance that would be necessary for an eminent professorship. Our general thought is your appointment as Professor of Genetics. However, joint appointments between departments are not unusual here and might be dictated either by financial considerations, or your own expressed interests. The Biochemistry department is evidently willing to offer very ample space in its own excellent facilities, a new wing that has just been constructed next door to the Genetics Building. (Barring any moves in an altogether different direction, my own lab. will move to a new research wing at the medical school in the fall of 1958 or early 1959. This is about three blocks away.)

Our main concern in this plan is to furnish the best opportunity and environment for research and graduate training in the field of your own interest. If the plan materializes, I would imagine its greatest appeal for you would be the university atmosphere. In addition, there is every reason why it should also be financially attractive to you, & I will not take time now to extol Madison as a place to live.

I am personally very optimistic that we can clear the remaining hurdles on our side. However, they will involve enough legwork and discussion with a number of people, that I would not want to go ahead without some slight encouragement from you. I can hardly expect a definite statement to a nebulous question, but this would be an opportunity for you to say (if you felt it as I hope you don't) that you were too deeply rooted where you are to even consider any alternative arrangements. If I did not think the prospects were good for a very attractive setup, I would not bother you at this point. However, as you know these matters have to

clear through many channels, so for the time being they should be kept between ourselves, as far as this is possible.

It would, of course, be best if we could have some occasion to discuss this at closer hand. Would you be open to visiting Madison some time in July? (Esther and I are leaving for 3-4 months in Australia August 1.) While waiting to hear from you, I will see if an invitation can be backed up by travelling expenses, as I am sure ~~it would~~ it would.

I don't have to tell you what a delight it would be to me personally if this arrangement worked out. In writing this, I've been afraid of pressing you if a more deliberate reply might be more encouraging. I have also to be careful not to overstep the bounds of propriety- I'm sure you understand.

Yours,


Joshua Lederberg