

March 1, 1951.

Dr. Frederick L. Stone,
Chief, Office of Research Fellowships,
Division of Research Grants and Fellowships,
National Institutes of Health,
Bethesda 14, Maryland.

Dear Dr. Stone:

I am writing to you in connection with the professional plans of Mr. Robert Paul Levine, who has submitted an application for a post-doctoral research fellowship from the Public Health Service. Mr. Levine is qualifying for a Ph. D. from the Department of Botany at the University of California at Los Angeles.

Mr. Levine's original intention was to study in Italy with Dr. Buzzatti-Traverso, but the feasibility of this program has, of course, been put into grave doubt by the blackening international situation. I understand that he proposed an alternative program, in his original application, to be followed at the University of Texas, but of which I do not know the details.

Last summer, I had an opportunity to meet Mr. Levine at the University of California at Berkeley, and formed an unusually favorable impression of his intellectual and professional capacities, which was reinforced by the comments of my colleagues there. His original interests have been principally in the field of physiological genetics as applied to natural populations, which meant, at that time, mostly higher plants and animals. But I have been trying my best to entice him into a consideration of bacterial populations from similar points of view. In this laboratory, we have recently found the means for genetic analysis of natural differences between bacterial populations, particularly *Escherichia coli*. I would like to encourage him to amend his application for a fellowship to permit him to work on this type of problem in this laboratory, but would first like to have your advice on the best procedure to follow. I should not like to see his chances for an award prejudiced by undue meddling with the application, but feel on the other hand that he would be an especially desirable recruit both into this laboratory and into the peri-medical sciences.

Yours sincerely,

Joshua Lederberg,
Associate Professor of Genetics.