

DATE: November 22, 1976

To : File

FROM : Joshua Lederberg

SUBJECT: Conversation with Haagen-Smit in re. Ed Tatum on 11/18/76

213-7968208

Haagen-Smit has looked and has no files or correspondence that dates back to that time. He is hardly able to go to his office during his present illness.

Ed came to Haagen-Smit's lab in the summer of 1938 because he knew that Haagen-Smit had the only microanalytical chemical facilities on the West Coast. He was also able to teach Ed the micro-techniques that he had learned from Pregl.

There is no connection with K \ddot{u} gl. In fact, Haagen-Smit was a little surprised and I had to insist that Ed had spent any time there at all. He recommended that I consult Professor E. Havinga, Leiden who had been at Utrecht at that time if I want to find out any more.

Haagen-Smit had a lot of comments about what it was like to be in competition with that group. K \ddot{u} gl, Ruzicka and Butenandt were a troika but often at dagger's point with one another. They had tremendous facilities in connection with their industrial laboratories that no university could possibly touch. He mentioned by contrast that the year's budget for the Biology Department at Cal Tech shared by 10-15 people was \$100,000. In that context he feels that Ed should be very proud to have been able to make the contribution that he did against such competition.

Apparently Haagen-Smit sees that his entire contribution was in providing the techniques and the facilities. He was also busy with many, many other things especially as the war came on and he had to provide microanalytical services for the entire country.

He pictured himself and Ed as young professors who were totally outside that aggressive competition. Ed in particular had a sportsman-like outlook and would not think of exploiting what he learned from others and would tend to shy away from overt competition in the field that somebody else had staked out. He was a very pleasant person to have in the lab, very much willing to do all of the necessary technical work when there was never enough assistance. (Compare this with Ed Adelberg's similar remark).

Haagen-Smit was particularly busy at the time of Butenandt's discovery and was not in particularly close touch with Tatum at that particular point, so he has nothing to report about that event. He was too busy to do fun things like write letters.