

INDIANA UNIVERSITY

BLOOMINGTON, INDIANA 47404

Oct. 24, 1966

OCT 25 1966

DEPARTMENT OF ZOOLOGY
JORDAN HALL 222

AREA CODE 812
TEL. NO. 337-4570

Dr. Joshua Lederberg
Department of Genetics
Stanford University School of Medicine
300 Pasteur Drive
Palo Alto, California

Dear Josh:

By this time, I hope, you have received a copy of the paper you asked for. Please bear in mind that it has not yet been published and, insofar as ~~you~~ might be mentioned ~~it~~, it should be referred to only as an address, not as an article that has been circulated. It is likely of course to be a couple of years before it is really published because Proceedings usually take about that long. But I see no reason to refrain from referring to anything that it says as having been said in an address.

The address was written too hastily for my taste and therefore has various omissions and slurred treatments that I would otherwise have avoided. I would also have been more careful to do justice to what other people have said although -- as you will presently see when I send you a copy of Abelson's address given about a month after that -- there are people who pursue exactly the opposite policy in this respect. I do think it is important for you to know how misrepresented my position has been by some of the most prestigious persons. That is one reason I appreciate the more your desire to read a copy of my address. But bear in mind ^{greatly} that there are important things I should have said but failed to. After all, the address, with an intermission in the middle of it, occupied two hours on that last day, last session, of the Congress, where it stood alone since no one could be found who would stick his neck out to be on the program with me.

It is very good of you to ask to see this for the discussions you are going to enter into in "Science and Man." It is a remarkable series that has in my opinion out-Haldaned Haldane himself, being on the whole even sounder, partly because not so smart-Alecky. I hope it sets the beginning of a new kind of scientific writing for the public and the popular press. You could, ^{no more} though, jazz it up just a little, to the advantage of its going-over and getting-~~to~~-the-public aspect.

Although I appreciate your suggesting that I might write my own guest column some time on this subject of human genetic betterment, for which I consider the term "eugenics" entirely inappropriate because of its past connections and present mental associations, it is very unlikely that I would find the time, at least for several months to come. Perhaps you have heard of my permanently weakened condition, caused by heart attacks of some 18 months ago. This has enormously restricted my activities and the time I have for them. Even my going to Chicago to give the address was made possible only because a couple of people went along and I confined myself just to giving that address, hiding out the remainder of the time. We do not have visitors or go visiting, with the rarest and most restricted kind and manner of exception. Nevertheless, I am piled up with commitments, not to speak of a continual accumulation of correspondence, that hardly allows me time to even think, and I find myself unable to get what I have set as the most important jobs for myself done. But I am always hoping to see some lightening up in a further part of the tunnel that I may

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reach within two or three months. So if your discussions of human genetic control, and its relation to other important projects for man, were to be postponed for a couple of months, it might well be (so I now hope and think) that I could accept your kind invitation to write what you call a "possible corrective".

If I were younger I too would want to have a very close look at the neurological basis of human psychology and the possibilities of computers as aids and as rivals to it. I wonder whether Sperry, with whom Benzer has been working (I don't know if he still is there), is doing what you consider good work along these lines. But it is out of the question for me -- I should only like occasionally to get a brief that gave general outlines for an ignoramus.

With kindest personal regards,

Yours sincerely,



HJM:slh

H. J. Muller