

Caspersson

November 29, 1960

Dr. J. E. Mack
Science Officer
American Embassy
Stockholm, Sweden

Dear Julian:

Thank you for your note of the 21st and the clipping that accompanied it. I had not known of the character of this Swedish journalistic interest and was very glad to see it.

My guess is that the article is a mild distortion based on fact of some remarks that Caspersson may have made in a newspaper interview. He came through here on his way to Japan and I was very glad to have a chance to talk to him about some of our instrumental developments. Our intention of building a microspectrophotometer as a detector of organisms is based, to a very large extent, on the pioneering work that he has done in this kind of instrumentation. He has also been very helpful in easing the procurement of some components from Zeiss that they are putting together for a possible commercial model of his instrument. He has also agreed to run some samples in a preliminary way on his own instrument and I will, if possible, take the opportunity to visit him, perhaps in April, to take a look at these results. So we are certainly getting some very definite help from him and I am not unhappy that he should have an opportunity to bring it up, although of course, the newspaper accounts are as usual somewhat exaggerated. We are not, on the other hand, contemplating any very active collaboration since, as he says, he is rather involved in other problems. However, he has offered to help answer some of our technical problems from time to time as we may bring them up to him, and we may very well take advantage of this opportunity. I would be very much surprised if he has any more explicit intentions of going into exobiology than are indicated by this discussion.

For your own use only, as background material, I am sending you some of the reports and applications we have been making to NASA. If you need this kind of background, it may help you understand where Caspersson would fit into the picture. But these particular pieces of paper, at the present time, are not for public distribution.

If you will have left in January we will have missed you if we come through Stockholm in April. I hope you have enjoyed your tour of duty there as much as you anticipated. Do you know who your successor will be?

Yours sincerely,

Joshua Lederberg
Professor of Genetics

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