

November 20, 1962

Dr. R. A. Brink
Professor of Genetics
The University of Wisconsin
College of Agriculture
Madison 6, Wisconsin

Dear Alec:

Your letter of the 14th inviting me to help dedicate the new Genetics Building was very gratifying to me. I know how much it means to you and our friends to finally have this construction in sight after so many years. All of my good wishes go to you in the materialization of this dream.

It would be a real pleasure to join you next spring, but I am afraid that it is just about impossible to fit this into my present schedule and I will have to say no, with real regrets.

It is a bit odd to have "Genetics" go on here as it does without the participation of fruit flies or maize, but we try to make DNA make up for it. The most exciting findings these days concern the separation of different genes of Bacillus subtilis, according to the guanine-cytosine/adenine-thymine composition of the DNA molecules, and efforts to achieve the replication of genetic activity in vitro with the use of Kornberg's polymerase system. In the latter we are at least able to do some fairly clean experiments, which have so far given a rather negative result which can probably be attributed to the difficulty of maintaining the alignment of the primer DNA molecules over the several micron distances and the ninety minute time intervals involved in the complete replication of a single molecule. The DNA that is produced looks very much as if it is convoluted and reconvoluted many times, so that short segments of the primer are multiply reduplicated in the copied DNA strands. This suggestion also leads to some prospects for experimental solution.

With best personal regards,

As ever,

Joshua Lederberg
Professor of Genetics

HL:edf