Dear Professor Lederberg,

I received your very kind letter from Prof. Hoffmann-Ostenhof yet in Vienna just on the day starting to the US. First of all I will thank you for your kindness in writing to quickly answer and keep your promise for being so late with the present letter. The cause of it was that for the whole time since the day I received your letter we had been either in camps on our way and only since this week Monday did our things become somewhat sure.

If you permit I shall in short write you the complete story up to matters. After we had to leave from Hungary we decided to go to the US, because we knew that there we shall find our fields of interest: biochemistry, genetics, microbiology in the highest level in the whole world, and so we shall have the best possibilities to work and study further in some place convenient with respect to our training and interest. So we were very glad in receiving your letter and my friend and colleague [insert name] too — we are very much interested in the work and program you mentioned to go on in your laboratory. I may say, it coincides just with our recent interest: although, according to our training we are rather biochemists than geneticists, it is just the field we found most exciting problems which have equivalent biochemical and genetic aspects, so we were very glad to hear that I and perhaps my colleague too would have the encouraging possibility to work under your leading in your laboratory. It was very encouraging all the more as we in Prof.GYÖFFY’s institute did very well know the work of your institute and wanted to go in many aspects on similar ways in our research.

After arriving to Camp Kilmer, and then to New York we had no possibility to come in contact with you at once and in the other hand we got very readily a support from the Office of the National Academy of Sciences.
Here Dr. Csápi from Rochester Institute, working temporarily in the National Academy of Sciences was extremely kind to us, helped to come in contact with the Rockefeller Foundation and with Dr. G. B. Van and Prof. Oclesa. I received by kindness of Dr. Brown a visiting research appointment (4,600$) in Sloan Kettering Institute, my colleague found similar offers in New York University.

For us it was extraordinarily important to receive jobs as soon as possible since we are not single men but have family – a wife and my colleague 4 persons. Together, we have to have a new existence here starting from the nothing. Besides, it happened unfortunately, that my friend’s mother must be rapidly operated in New York.

So it seems that we shall settle in New York for at least one year. My ask to you is only to permit me and my friend too to remain in contact with you and somewhat later – if it is not unpleasant for you – to have the opportunity of visiting your institute.

You were so kind to offer the possibility to write to prof. Oppenheimer. Although it seems not to be necessary from your original point of view nevertheless I should like to ask you to mail the letters because of the following reasons:

For me such a reference would be necessary to make clear my qualifications. It might be dangerous for prof. Oppenheimer if I myself should write to him but your letters would not be harmful to him of whom it is well known to have many a scientific and correspondent connections with western institutes and personalities. Please ask him in the same letter, whether I might write letters in the future to his address as well. I am afraid that he may be in need of some materials and I hope to find a way for sending them some months to Hungary.

As to the teratoma effect, as I recalled, prof. Oppenheimer did not and wanted also not to publish anything before the Symposium in London this year. Here is again a question: what is your opinion about the possibility of
prof. C"h"sly in leaving for London? Could anything help him here in the U.S. to come out from Hungary for the Time of the Symposium?

We should be very much obliged if you would send us reprints from the recent works in your laboratory.

It is our present plan, in the first time we want to divide our time between English lessons and the library and to try to "read in" ourselves again into science. We would which seems for us - after the tragic occurrences in our homeland's and ourselves life - to be a little too.

Finally, I must beg your pardon for disturbing you with such an extensive and long letter and a lot of questions. I was encouraged to it only by Your very kind letter.

Sincerely Yours

Alexander Tomač
U.S. Hungary