June 25, 1947

AIRMAIL

Dr. E. L. Tatum
Osborn Botanical Laboratory
Yale University
New Haven, Connecticut

Dear Dr. Tatum:

Lederberg's typescript on "Problems in the genetics of microorganisms" is in Perry Wilson's hands at present. I have been unable to reach him on the telephone this afternoon but expect that I will be able to get the paper tomorrow for return to you. There is a rapidly growing interest on the campus in the genetics of microorganisms, and as our plans have developed for securing a man in this field I have tried to keep some of my colleagues in Bacteriology in touch with them. This explains why Wilson has the manuscript. I hope that our having retained the paper this long has not unduly inconvenienced Lederberg.

Inquiries concerning Lederberg have been directed to some of the people named as references in your recent letter. The returns on these inquiries are still incomplete. When I discussed the possibility of approaching Lederberg concerning our position with Dean Baldwin about 10 days ago he was definitely interested and urged that we get such further information about him as could be conveniently obtained at once. It is our hope that Lederberg is not under the necessity of formulating his plans for the coming year right away. If the further information concerning him is favorable, we would like to arrange for him to visit the campus to meet the interested people here and to give them a chance to visit with him. So far things look favorable but I do not wish to write Lederberg directly until it appears that there is a reasonable likelihood that an offer might ensue.

There are two other reasons why we have been somewhat delayed in moving ahead in this matter. The legislature, which is now in session, has not yet completed its action on the University budget. The outlook for a substantially increased appropriation appears to be good, but we may not know for perhaps two weeks what the figures will be and what funds will be available for remodeling and for new equipment. The latter are of direct significance in connection with the appointment of a man on the genetics of microorganisms. It is necessary that a laboratory be constructed for the new appointee in this building and that practically the entire line of equipment needed be purchased. It is expected that the necessary funds will be allocated, but it will take some months to put a laboratory into operating condition. There will be some delay, therefore, in getting a program under way here even if we should decide on an appointment now.

I would appreciate it if you would explain to Lederberg why he has not yet heard from us directly.

Sincerely yours,

R. A. Brink
Professor of Genetics

RAB/s

P.S. Perry Wilson is returning the typescript to me today (June 26). I will forward it at once.

R.A.B.