

16 November 1970

Dr. Matthew Meselson
Professor of Biology
Harvard University
Cambridge, MA 02138

Dear Dr. Meselson:

I welcomed your remarks at the panel discussion of the Conference on Evaluating Mutagenicity ... enthusiastically and support your concern for our genetic future. As a geneticist, I recognize the importance of your recommendation to begin monitoring immediately. I would like to suggest a possible site and talent bank for these and related programs.

You may be aware that the Biological Laboratories at Fort Detrick are being disbanded as a consequence of the President's directive of November 1969 on Biological and Chemical Warfare. These facilities and personnel have contributed to the national interest and scientific community in many ways in the past. At this time of national scientific need, it is surely a waste for these talents and capabilities to be lost for the present and future. It would seem to be a unique opportunity to establish a national center for study of those pressing genetic problems elaborated on at the conference. I would welcome your ideas for the possible utilization of these imminently available facilities and personnel toward some of the goals and aims expressed at the conference.

I am including an outline of the capacity of the Detrick facility and a summary of its professional community. These were prepared for distribution to a more general layman's community and may not contain the details

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of specific interest to you. If you care for additional information, I am sure it can be readily made available. I hope you share my concern in salvaging the research capacity at Detrick and in establishing the study of mutagenicity as a public health hazard.

I solicit your aid in working toward a possible mutual solution to both of these problems.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Sidney Halle". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned above the typed name.

SIDNEY HALLE
Principle Investigator
Genetics Branch
Virus and Rickettsia Division
Fort Detrick
Frederick, Maryland 21701