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THE UNIVERSITY OF ARIZONA
TUCSON

LUNAR AND PLANETARY LABORATORY OF
THE INSTITUTE OF ATMOSPHERIC PHYSICS

10 November 1960

Dr. Joshua Lederberg
Professor of Genetics
Stanford University
Medical Center
Palo Alto, California

Dear Dr. Lederberg:

Many thanks for your letter of September 26. I did not arrive here until October 7 and have had quite a rush to set up our Laboratory here and get the "Orthographic Atlas of the Moon" off to press. This happened on November 7, and we hope to have it available by about December 1.

Stanford University has been interested in radio astronomy, which I think is logical in view of the strong department of electrical engineering and Dr. Terman's interest. I am not surprised that the University has shown little interest in optical astronomy because of the very strong position of the University of California nearby. Over two million dollars were invested in the Lick Observatory recently, and it would be difficult for Stanford to do anything comparable. The University campus would not be a suitable place for ground based astronomical observation, nor would the hills to the west or the mountains of the Coast Range. There is no reason, however, why Stanford could not set up a strong theoretical department, working closely with physics; or even a modest solar department, taking advantage of the reasonably good daytime conditions and the interest in radio astronomy which could be fruitfully channeled into solar physics.

As to promoting additional ground based facilities for the study of the Moon and the planets, I feel as keenly about the need now as I did when I prepared my memorandum for NASA last June. I am sure there will be no objection to your showing this memorandum to Professor Seifert in his capacity as President of the American Rocket Society. I have listed in this memorandum

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a variety of problems that need our early attention, and you and Dr. Seifert can undoubtedly work out a program which would fit in with the overall policies and interests of Stanford. If I can be of assistance on specific points, please let me know. Frankly, I have been somewhat concerned about the prospects of additional ground based facilities for lunar and planetary studies. While there is a widespread opinion that much additional work needs to be done, the agencies having the responsibilities for the space program appear reluctant to assume this responsibility for a matching ground based program. Perhaps additional "education" is needed. Here at the University of Arizona I have taken the following position, in discussions with President Harvill and others: I can personally get telescope time at the McDonald and Mt. Wilson Observatories, and probably elsewhere; but this doesn't solve the problem for junior personnel and students and it is particularly important that a strong graduate school be set up to supply the necessary manpower in this field of very great potential scientific interest.

With best regards,

Sincerely yours,

Gerard P. Kuiper

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PS - I am sending, under separate cover, a set of my reprints.