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The University of Vermont

COLLEGE OF ARTS AND SCIENCES, DEPARTMENT OF POLITICAL SCIENCE
THE OLD MILL, BURLINGTON, VERMONT 05401

April 5, 1973

Professor Joshua Lederberg
Department of Genetics
Stanford University School of Medicine
Stanford, California 94305

Dear Professor Lederberg:

I have not forgotten your letter of February 12, and the questions you raised at that time.

Let me turn first to the role of the German scientists in the six decades prior to 1933. I have dug up the announcement, Humanities II May 1972 from the National Endowment of the Humanities, listing the research in this area now being conducted by Dr. Niles Holt at Illinois State in Normal.

Secondly, the translations into German of the Nuremberg trials are, to say the least, incomplete. The first trial of the major war criminals was printed in the so called Blue Series with prosecution and defense documents in the original German. The Green Series, that contained the partial records of the subsequent trials, are another matter. The military tribunals in these trials were American and the publication of these records was a United States Government effort. Of course various documents have appeared in books put out by private German publishers.

I know of only one book in English that deals with German reactions to the Nuremberg trials: Wilbourn Benton, Nuremberg: German Views of the War Trials 1955. Unfortunately the copy in our library is missing and my recollection of the book is very hazy.

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In this country the fundamental issues relating to eugenics may only now be surfacing in court actions. Probably you have already gotten hold of the text of the United States Supreme Court opinions in the recent abortion case. If you haven't it is Jane Roe vs Henry Wade 35 L Ed 2nd 147. The complete text is published in the so called advanced sheets of the Lawyers' Edition and I am sure that your law library has this material. Probably you will find the discussion of Justice Blackmun with respect to the unborn never having been "recognized in the law as persons in the whole sense" quite interesting. He goes on to say that the compelling point with respect to the state's interest in potential life is viability. I have had a long discussion with our own constitutional expert about this case and he is emphatic in stating that far

from closing the issue of life in the law, the Supreme Court's recent decision only opened a whole spectrum of difficult questions in the problem area.

Please forgive me for taking so long to produce this very brief reply. As you can gather, I would have preferred to do a little bit more research before answering but at this point perhaps a half loaf is better than none and I will certainly have more time in the summer to look things up more thoroughly.

On another subject, the chairman of our Zoology Department, Richard Glade, may have an opening in Genetics for next September. He thinks very highly of you and would doubtlessly consider a recent Ph.D. if you happened to have one on your list for placement. Of course, if the candidate is closer to Vermont than California happens to be, that might make a small difference; equally so anyone qualifying under Affirmative Action.

With all my best.

Sincerely,

Raul Hilberg

Raul Hilberg
Chairman

RH:fb