

UNIVERSITY OF CALIFORNIA
COLLEGE OF AGRICULTURE
AGRICULTURAL EXPERIMENT STATION

DIVISION OF BACTERIOLOGY
DAVIS, CALIFORNIA

May 26, 1950

Dr. R. L. Starkey
Professor of Microbiology
Rutgers University
Nichol Avenue
New Brunswick, New Jersey

Dear Dr. Starkey:

It was a very severe shock to me to receive from my uncle in New York City, several newspaper clippings describing the suit of Al Schatz against the Rutgers Foundation and Dr. Waksman. At the time, I wrote a joint letter to both of them, urging that this matter be solved within the "family." Perhaps I'm a naive Pollyanna for even putting such a wish in writing; at all events the matter appears to be headed for some sort of public hearing in the courts.

This whole business has made Bea and me quite depressed; to think that the teamwork, which for almost a decade ^{and more} to find an answer to the problem of gram-negative chemotherapy, should end up with such an altercation. I wish I could spend a day with you to learn what is actually going on; only a few fragmentary newspaper clippings are our source of knowledge. This would have been so simple if I could have gone to the meetings.

As far as I can fathom, the situation is as follows: Al is suing Dr. Waksman for a share of royalties which the latter has received from the Foundation, claiming that he was given to understand that all profits were to go to the Foundation, with none diverted to private individuals. Since some funds were diverted to Dr. Waksman, Al is asking for a share, too, as co-author on the patent.

It was, I must confess, my understanding that all funds were to go to the Foundation, and Bea and I were quite surprised to learn that a considerable sum had been diverted to Dr. Waksman. We feel that it is very proper that Dr. Waksman should be rewarded in a material way for his long years of work, but is rather unfortunate in the way the rewarding has worked out. That is, it is too bad that an initial impression got out that all funds were to go to the University.

As to Al, we are quite surprised at his action, since he has impressed us as being very idealistic and unmaterialistic. Although lawyers may show he has perfect legal grounds for his action, I am positive that were I in his position, I would not act in this manner.

Mort Starr visited Al at Brooklyn College, to see how the latter was making out in Mort's former job. Mort has returned to Davis with rather a fantastic story, which runs something like this: Al claims that Dr. Waksman's lawyers have considered submitting my joint letter to the both of them, referred to above, as evidence of Dr. Waksman's good faith, etc. Al told Mort that if this is done, Al's lawyers will put me on the witness stand and attempt to smear my character in the public eye so seriously that I may find

difficulty in securing employment. The purpose of this would be to render my testimony as a witness for Dr. Waksman of no value. Al's lawyers allegedly would have me portrayed as a Communist straight from Moscow, or else perhaps a Nazi ex-stormtrooper! I feel this must be the result of Al's overwrought state of mind; I cannot for one moment think that he would allow friendship to be abused in such a dishonorable manner.

At any rate, I shall certainly not refrain from making any objective statements required of me. In actuality, however, my statements may not be of much import since I came to the laboratory after the main work on streptomycin had been done.

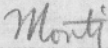
I will see Mr. Watson and Sam Epstein when they come out to California. It might be more convenient to have them stop off at Davis on their return trip east; for I would like Bea to hear what they have to say. At any rate, they can reach me by phone the afternoon or evening of June 19th, to arrange a meeting in the next day or so. It is not likely we would be heading off into the mountains so soon in the summer, but if so, I could always come out to meet them. If such a trip developed, I would let you know in ample time.

My laboratory telephone is: Davis 3611, Extension 785. Our home telephone is Davis 8101.

If you care to, I would appreciate receiving your appraisal of this most distressing situation. On the other hand, I would certainly respect your reluctance to put your feelings into writing. It would be so good to talk to you personally, for I feel you best qualified to analyze the matter with both intimate insight as well as an impersonal outlook.

With warmest regards to Mrs. Starkey and yourself.

Most cordially,



DONALD M. REYNOLDS
Instructor

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