

BERNICE P. BISHOP MUSEUM
HONOLULU 17, HAWAII

5 October 1953

Mr. Grote Reber

Wailuku, Maui

Dear Mr. Reber:

Dr. W. F. Libby has asked us to comment on your letter to him. He wants us to determine whether or not the carbon you offer to send in for a reading of age is a "strategic" sample. By that, he means, will it really, if the age is known, give a date of high significance.

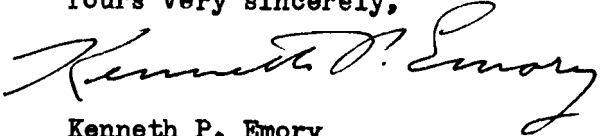
We know that Libby can handle only a few samples a year and that it is most important he confine these to ones liable to be of great importance. Your sample would doubtless give the age of that particular lava flow, but it could hardly establish that people were living at that time simply because a legend was attached to it. It would have to flow over ruins, and it would be necessary to be able to obtain artifacts belonging to the time of those ruins, for the age of the carbon to be of strategic significance.

I believe I indicated the importance of this in our conversation at the museum, and expressed the hope that your explorations would result in finding distinct traces of human occupation at the time of flows. Could you follow out this flow to see if at any point it crosses a wall or a stone platform?

We would not feel justified in burdening Libby with this sample until something more definite than a legend can be connected with it. The so-called 1750 flow does pass over stone walls, I have been told.

Only three or four ounces of carbonized wood are necessary ~~for~~ a reading and they would best be kept in a glass jar.

Yours very sincerely,



Kenneth P. Emory