

At present at Ravello  
Near Katgoolie  
West Australia.  
26th Sept. 1956.

Dear Sir Ronald

Thank you very much for the letter in which you comment on our paper. I'm glad that you approve of what Watson and I have done. Keith is sending it to the R.A.S.

I am not, after all, coming to London for Blackett's symposium; the Treasury has reduced the Universities' grant and my trip was one of the first economies. Keith is reading a paper for me. This will give the Australian results, and the comparison with the British and American data. There will be a short section on Watson's extension of your statistics, and a few remarks about our paper, referring especially to the sampling problem.

If you decide (and I hope you will) to give a paper on the statistical aspects, I <sup>do</sup> hope you will make what ever use you think fit of the developments that have been made here.

At the moment I am stationed, as one of a team of fives on the Trans-continental Railway in the middle of the Nullarbor Plains where we are waiting with seismographs <sup>for</sup> the destination of Sir William

Penny's bombs. It is a real Providence that entrusts a seismograph to a geologist, and I anticipate some extraordinary results! There have been long delays through weather, and we are getting impatient and a little stale. Two conditions are required for satisfactory reasons before the bombs are exploded. There must be a S.E. wind to carry the radioactive "dust" ~~about~~ away from the populated regions of Australia, and there must be no clouds. The delays have been caused by the absence of one or the presence of the other. There has been a good deal of public reaction against these tests on account of the danger of infecting areas with radioactivity. The Monte Bello tests produced radioactive rain in Brisbane so there is some reason for this public resentment.

This area is aptly named; there is a bush as high as your head every mile and the rest is grass and prickly herbs. The plain is floored by limestone, which is, in places, hollowed out into caverns partly water-filled & partly filled by air. Meteorological pressure variations cause pressure differences between the air in the caverns and the atmosphere, and these differences are relieved through

blackholes penetrating the surface. Through these the Earth respines. Above ground the surface conforms to the geoid to an accuracy I have never seen before, and never before have I felt so forcibly that the Earth is, in fact, a sphere. The Mullerbar Plain has been abandoned by Nature to birds and insects, lizards and mice, ~~and other small animals~~ and submitted by Man to the ravages of rabbits and the less dangerous attentions of a sparse population of beef cattle. There is little surface water, and ~~few~~ consequently few malarious carrying mosquitoes, so that unlike the Eastern States rabbits are still abundant and healthy. It is said that a good trapper can make £60 a week. Most of the rabbit meat goes to America, where, along with Kangaroo tail soup, it is regarded as a <sup>great</sup> delicacy. There are very few Kangaroos on the Plain, but there are a few Asiatic camels, remnants of the caravans which used to be used in the Australian deserts.

Thank you again for reading our paper.

Yours sincerely,

Tad Swing.