

January 15, 1959

Dear KA//// Mehta:

Do you think you have to goad me to answer an honest question?

First of all, it's your own joke to call me Nobel Laureate or stinker or whatever else you please; I don't ask for any of these distinctions, but you can use whatever title amuses you. My friends call me Joshua.

Secondly, I am inclined to agree with you both about Bascom Hill and the astronautics program. Your practical argument makes the most sense, and perhaps if the administration didn't have a local parking privilege they might appreciate it more acutely. There certainly is enough land on the flats to the south and west that, off hand, it seems asinine to build on the hilltops, and in so doing destroy what may remain of natural beauties. But I can't say I feel strongly enough one way or another to want to get in the battle myself just now. I am enclosing a copy of some remarks by DuBridges that I would readily echo on the space program. But I suppose it's better we compete with the Russians, if we're going to at all, by aiming at other targets, not one another.

You asked me about salary. I never discussed this with the administration at all (in fact I don't think anyone here knows yet what Stanford offered me). I didn't want any extra-special concessions. I do think that the salary levels and prospects do play some role in keeping staff. Their impact for me was their effect on long term history and prospects in building a group of colleagues working in certain directions. (One fellow I was after, for Medical Genetics, was being offered \$9,500 and this was pretty much in line with local standards; he went to Chicago for 13,500.) I will back up Elvehjem this much: I would have left with much less hesitation than I did if I had anticipated any difficulties in the way of the university's proposals. I would prefer not to take any personal part, or by quotation, in this business, but I hope for the sake of the university that the budget is not cut back. (Or are you paying too high taxes on your extramural income to agree?)

All best wishes to you, and I hope to hear from you (perhaps even have a visit in due course,) at Stanford.