ANNUAL REVIEWS INC.
[A NONPROFIT CORPORATION]
4139 EL CAMINO WAY
PALO ALTO, CALIFORNIA 94306, USA
[415] 493-4400

DIRECTORS
W. O. BAKER
I. L. BENNETT, JR.
J. E. HOWELL
J. LEDERBERG
W. K. H. PANOFSKY
J. R. PAPPENHEIMER
C. S. PITTENDRIGH
E. E. SNELL
R. N. THOMAS
A. M. WEINBERG
H. A. ZUCKERMAN

FOUNDING MEMBER EMERITUS
J. M. LUCK

CONSULTING EDITOR-IN-CHIEF
WILLIAM KAUFMANN

CHIEF EXECUTIVE OFFICER AND SECRETARY-TREASURER
JOHN S. MCNEIL

PRODUCTION COORDINATOR
SHARON E. HAWKES

May 9, 1977

Dr. Philip Handler, President
National Academy of Sciences
2101 Constitution Ave.
Washington, D.C. 20418

Dear Phil,

The Board of Directors of Annual Review has authorized and requested that I begin some discussion with you about the possibility of establishing an annual prize to help to bring a bit more honor and esteem to the role of the writer of scientific reviews. There have, of course, been very many comments lamenting how thankless but important a task that has been, and it occurred to us that we might be able to use this mechanism to redress the situation in a way that would also be beneficial to the integrity of the overall scientific effort. There are a number of ways this might be done, but it was the Board's strong preference to request that the National Academy of Sciences be the agent for the administration of an annual prize, the funds for which would be the responsibility of Annual Reviews, Inc. We also have a tentative offer, still to be presented to the Board of the Institute for Scientific Information, Inc., to share in the sponsorship of this prize. It is quite likely that other donors might be equally enthusiastic and could then enlarge the scope of the effort.

What we have in mind now, and can give you substantial assurance of a commitment of funds, is an annual award of $5000 that we hope might be announced at the occasion of the Academy's annual meeting. We could also offer an additional $500 as a direct gift to the Academy towards the inevitable incidental expenses of assuming such a responsibility. We plan, if this can be successfully negotiated, to offer a 5 year committment, the payments to be made year by year, to help assure the continuity of the prize and the expectation that this might be renewable from time to time.

It was our hope and intention that the prize might be designated as the James Murray Luck Prize for excellence in scientific reviewing. However, Murray has by no means given his final approval to this designation as yet, and this and every other aspect of the suggestion are open to friendly discussion before we make a formal offer.

Although I believe it has been some years since you took a direct part in the work of Annual Reviews, I trust you are familiar with its fundamental style and

purposes and can understand and agree with our aims in the present initiative.

There will be a subcommittee of the Board working out the formal details during the next few months, and in large measure awaiting the response of the Academy to such a proposal. We had in mind that the prizes might be initiated in spring 1979 to allow a reasonable period of time for the formalization of the arrangement and to establish some committee to make a selection. We thought that members of the Academy and editors of principal journals would be the ones invited to make nominations to this committee. We thought it would be better to recognize cumulative efforts in the writing of reviews, say over the last 10 years, rather than be required to specify a single prizeworthy article. We thought there might be some language to stress the desirability but not the imperative of looking particularly at the work of younger authors in a way that might enhance their self-confidence and motivation to contribute in this fashion. We also thought, as a practical matter, that the committee might wish to select a particular field of science for emphasis in a given year, rather than include all of it in competition each time. In fact, my own suggestion had been to initiate the awards in biomedical research, but on this point I was overruled by the Board. If this is successful, however, we might well imagine that other sponsors might be willing to fund an expansion of such prizes and if several can be offered each year, then some differentiation by field for each prize could readily be worked out.

We did not believe that the vehicle used for publication (for example whether or not in Annual Reviews!) was a pertinent consideration. We will need some guidance from you as to whether in would be appropriate to limit these awards to the United States or Western Hemisphere residents. All these and many other questions are issues on which we may have some inclinations but have not such a rigid view that we would fail to benefit from your own thoughts and suggestions.

If the idea appeals to you at all, I hope you will give it some attention or let me know to whom you have referred it for further action; and of course there would be some merit to discussing it over the phone after you've had some time to think about it.

Yours cordially,

Joshua Lederberg
President, Annual Reviews, Inc.

CC: W. Kaufmann