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February 20, 1993

Dr. Joshua Lederberg
Rockefeller University
1230 York Ave., Box 400
New York, NY 10021

Dear Dr. Lederberg:

Thank you for your time and advice.

As we discussed, I think our best researchers and most creative minds may have a way of being in relationship to their subject matter, that is conveyed by their presence and in their speaking, with a value independent from the abstract summary of their results.

If so, then one of the benefits of the New York Academy Channel may be to raise the mean of scientific work, especially by providing to graduate students who are not at the top 10-15 research universities in America, additional elements of the educational benefits that are now available readily only at the best universities. The benefits could extend globally, as the type of Channel you suggested could be a very attractive global channel (and possibly of unusual value to Russian scientists who are eager for wide contact with the current discussions of Western scientists but have a desperate shortage of foreign exchange).

- I can imagine a Tuesday brown-bag on the New York Academy Channel that could engage a global audience in challenging problems. For example, consider the possibility of gene-splicing seaweed and cash crops, so one could irrigate the deserts with salt water and make them bloom. If this was possible, it would be a wonderful contribution. Small groups of researchers now are working on the problem. But suppose you advertise it for a Tuesday global brown-bag and bring together several of the best researchers tackling this problem, and creative thinkers from related lines of work. For an hour and a half on Tuesdays, perhaps, scientists throughout the world might have a common focus - and perhaps a graduate student in China will be inspired and think of an idea.

I wonder whether you might take the lead to develop such experiments in scientific creativity? I think it's reasonable to imagine the New York Academy Channel becoming one of the first global scientific channels, an attractive vehicle for such experiments.

I have just written to Rod Nichols and Alan McGowan, as you suggested, and will look forward to speaking with them.

Many thanks - and best wishes,

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Lloyd S. Etheredge". The signature is written in a cursive style with a large initial 'L' and 'E'.

(Dr.) Lloyd S. Etheredge, Director
International Scientific Networks Project