

June 1, 1966

Dr. John Z. Bowers
President, Macy Foundation
16 West 46th Street
New York, New York

Dear John:

I thought I should give you a little bulletin on the progress of our ACME computer project. Enclosed is a rather detailed technical description of what we have in mind to set up.

Perhaps more important is what I hope will be a temporary setback, namely that the Study Section which reviewed our proposal got into something of an embroil about it, and the Council sent it back for further review. We are having a rather extraordinary site visit in a couple of days which seems to represent the Council and the Administration rather than the Study Section. On the whole I would regard this as a rather optimistic sign. The best prognosis is that while this does represent some delay, it is not a really serious setback. We should know more definitely by the end of the month.

The delay almost proved to be nearly fatal to the project in one sense, namely that IBM was at first unwilling to reschedule its delivery of the machines we had ordered for a somewhat earlier acceptance date. However, after considerable effort we did get a new quotation on delivery and as things now stand, if we can clear up the funding, the machines will be installed as of September 30 this year. Since we were able to make considerable improvements in the technical configuration by the scheduling review, this is, if anything, an improvement for the actual operational time table of the system for the School of Medicine.

Our main challenge is probably the one of education and indoctrination, and we are making real headway in this regard, particularly among the clinical departments. Several of them, separately and together, are organizing study programs to see the most constructive ways in which computer support can be applied to problems of patient care. There is much less difficulty about this in more basic research lines, as you might imagine, since the people in the labs are already fairly well informed about the potential advantages that can accrue through the use of these machines.

With regard to the technical problems, we are moving ahead very well, and I am sure will be in a position to put up a very fine system indeed as soon as the machines can be installed.

Dr. John Z. Bowers

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I will write you again as soon as we have more definite word about NIH actions, which are of course quite crucial to our further development.

With best wishes,

Sincerely yours,

Joshua Lederberg
Professor of Genetics

ENCL:

Wickertall Summary of ACME systems 5/26/66. AS-1
Case list + program
CSRO dedication program