

December 5, 1990

Professor Kosta Tsipis  
American Academy of Arts and Sciences  
Norton's Woods, 136 Irving Street  
Cambridge, Massachusetts 02138

Dear Kosta:

Although I am in principle interested in the concerns embodied in the proposal for the Project on Research Resources Deployment, I must decline your invitation to serve on the advisory board. There are several reasons for this. Most importantly, I have too many things to do. In addition, I am agnostic rather than partisan on the central point regarding the establishment of a federally-funded research and development agency of the sort you describe. Finally, I found myself in disagreement with several of the points made in the proposal, as follows.

On pages 3 and 4, the proposal unnecessarily implies some sort of zero-sum game between federal support of basic research and support of science and technology in the interests of socio-economic developments. To my mind this is counterproductive.

On pages 5 and 6, the proposal takes the view that there are five social goals which consume federally funded R and D in natural sciences and technology; the five do not include health, and environmental concerns are lumped with energy. Health is clearly a social goal and has consumed federally funded R and D in large amounts. Why omit it? Lumping environmental concerns only in energy is a major policy assumption which completely leaves out research into the biosphere, which may in the long run prove to be critical to environmental problems.

One possible result from the slant of the proposal is a federal department of science and technology. Perhaps it is 30 years at the NIH that influences me, but I believe that science benefits from being parceled out among many federal agencies rather than being directed by a single monolithic organization.

With best regards,

Sincerely,



Maxine F. Singer