



# THE ROCKEFELLER UNIVERSITY

1230 YORK AVENUE · NEW YORK, NEW YORK 10021

February 13, 1979

Dr. David R. Goddard  
Office of the Home Secretary  
National Academy of Sciences  
2101 Constitution Avenue  
Washington, D.C. 20418

Dear Dr. Goddard:

The committee for the James Murray Luck Award met on the Rockefeller campus on February 8, 1979, all members being present, and has arrived at a nominee for the first award. The individual we propose is Dr. G. Alan Robison, Professor and Chairman, Department of Pharmacology, University of Texas Medical School at Houston. A statement of the basis for our recommendation, a citation, and a vitae with selected bibliography are attached.

The material we considered in arriving at the nomination included nominees received from a sample of over one hundred scientists in key positions who were queried by the committee plus suggestions by members of the committee itself, together with citation data supplied by the Institute for Scientific Information. The initial search yielded a list of thirty scientists clearly meriting consideration for the award. In sifting these we were aided by citation analyses, examination of representative publications by members of the committee and of course discussions in the committee meeting based on the various members' individual experience. The citation data were quite helpful but it is clear that they can be even more so another year if the search is begun earlier and Dr. Garfield and his colleagues are consulted in time to make use of this year's experience effectively.

The principal criteria we used were that the contributions to reviewing on the part of a nominee should have extended over an appreciable period of time (rather than constituting only a single important paper), that we could find evidence that the reviewing effort contributed importantly to some scientific advance, and, secondarily, that the individual should not have been so widely recognized

for other scientific accomplishments that recognition for the reviewing effort would be overshadowed.

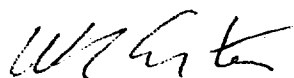
The members of the present committee agree that rotating the award in a systematic way over different principal fields of science from year to year would greatly facilitate the task of selecting nominees. That our candidate for the first award is identified with the life sciences is doubtless not unrelated to the fact that the largest number of worthy nominees coming to our attention fell into this area. The committee suggests that in each of the next two years it be planned in advance to select the nominee one year from the physical sciences (including mathematics and engineering) and one year from the behavioral and social sciences (perhaps including statistics and computer science). In this connection a suggestion I would like to offer based on experience with this year's procedure and materials (but that I did not have time to discuss with other members of the committee) is that consideration might be given to drawing the nominee from the life sciences in alternate years so that over a period of time, if the award continues to be given, the ratio of the life sciences to the other two areas would be 2:1:1.

Finally, in case you might wish to transmit the information to future committees for any use they might make of it, I might say that in arriving at our final selection it was exceedingly difficult to choose from among four "finalists" - Julius H. Comroe, Jr., A. H. Conney, Jane M. Oppenheimer, and G. Alan Robison. We found these four individuals so highly and nearly equally deserving that we aren't sure a random selection from the group might not have been as reasonable a way of coming down to one nominee as the rather extended deliberations we actually went through. Two other individuals we found highly deserving of consideration were Hans Bethe (down-graded somewhat because of his wide recognition for other efforts) and Donald Knuth.

I will keep on file for a time the results of our initial search in case the material might be of use to future committees.

For the selection committee

Yours sincerely,



William K. Estes

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Encs.