

May 12, 1969

The Honorable Edward Kennedy
Senator of the United States
Washington, D.C.

Dear Senator Kennedy,

I was deeply gratified at the thoughtfulness expressed in your introduction of the National Science Foundation Authorization Bill.

I had a very similar theme in mind when I wrote the column enclosed herewith whose specific subject is the open question of the toxicity of chlorine as used in water purification. The larger question is obviously the necessity of keeping a scientifically skeptical attitude about every aspect of our environment no matter how accustomed we have become to it. (Smoking would be another obvious example.)

The thought I am most eager to leave you with is that basic research of the kind supported by NSF does not always seem to be directed to giving answers to immediately pressing questions. Without it, however, we would hardly know what questions to ask!

Sincerely yours,

Joshua Lederberg
Professor of Genetics

Enclosure
JL/rr

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