

HANDLER, P.



THE ROCKEFELLER UNIVERSITY

1230 YORK AVENUE

NEW YORK, NY 10021

November 9, 1978

JOSHUA LEDERBERG

PRESIDENT

Dr. Philip Handler
President
National Academy of Sciences
2101 Constitution Avenue
Washington, D. C. 20418

Dear Phil:

Thank you for your comments about our response to Mayor Koch's demand for voluntary payments in lieu of taxes. I share your uneasiness about the credibility of the argument of "talking poor" and seriously pondered whether to allow it to remain in the letter. However, as we might have an unwonted reputation for affluence, which might be reinforced further by possibly distorted disclosures about the RBF grant, I finally concluded that we should leave no grounds for distinguishing ourselves from other academic and research institutions which share the same plight. The only other distinction that can be rationally posed as between us and for-profit organizations is that industry, as a whole, is better able to pass on its changing costs to its customers.

I certainly agree with the implied caution against self-righteousness in the presentation of these kinds of arguments; and I welcome your comments.

Yours sincerely,

Joshua Lederberg

P.S. Thank you for subbing for me at the Weizmann affair.

Encl.