



M. Javits file

THE ROCKEFELLER UNIVERSITY

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November 14, 1979

JOSHUA LEDERBERG

PRESIDENT

Mrs. Marian Javits
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Dear Marian:

This letter is to follow-up on the very interesting telephone conversation that we had a few weeks ago. You had sent me some material on various lines of optical research going on at the Environmental Research Institute of Michigan. I had been well aware of this group and their forerunners, the Willow Run Laboratories, having laid the groundwork for many innovative developments: multiband spectral reconnaissance perhaps being the most widely known.

As we discussed, the problems of funding bioengineering-related research are not at all unique to Erim: they are pervasive throughout the country. (You might consult Dr. Bruce H. McCormick, Dept. of Information Engineering, U. of Illinois at Chicago Circle, Box '4348, Chicago, Ill. 60680). In fact applicable science generally has a serious problem finding a home in this country; it is too costly and for other reasons a bad match to the career structures of academic life; on the other hand, it often may not have the prospect of narrow proprietary yield needed to justify conventional entrepreneurial investment. So we have a situation where many potential technical investors are waiting for someone else to incur the costs of path finding before they move in to skim the profits.

Our conversation turned more specifically to some applications of holography and I suggested that it might have a particular utility for curatorial and archiving purposes. I suggested in particular contacting Daniel Boorstin at the Library of Congress who would also know

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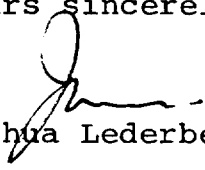
about Smithsonian, and Phil Handler at the National Academy of Sciences. We thought about the idea of a kind of holographic portrait gallery and that scientific types who on the one hand deserved to be "immortalized" might also be the most sympathetic to the use of an innovative technology for portraiture.

Just in the last couple of days, however, I noticed the enclosed article in the Wall Street Journal which raises some questions both about feasibility and competition. However it looks as if the field still just needs a good strong push and then it might well take off!

I have also asked Dr. Joseph Ernst of The Rockefeller Archive Center to look out for existing reports on museum applications.

I hope this is helpful and looking forward to seeing you soon.

Yours sincerely,



Joshua Lederberg

Encl.