

October 5, 1971

Dr. Torbjörn Caspersson  
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Medical Nobel Institutet  
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Dear Torbjörn,

It has been most gratifying to see the rapid pace of advance in human chromosome studies which has had such an important impetus from your own work. The symposium that you mention in your letter of October 1 appears to be very timely and indeed indispensable as a mean of furthering the orderly development of the field. I am very pleased that you thought of me to take a role in this symposium despite my having made no concrete contributions to the subject and I would certainly like to be as helpful as possible.

Unfortunately, this will be a difficult year in which to contemplate such a trip on my part as I am already somewhat over-committed in general and the months of May and June 1972 are particularly burdened with conflicting responsibilities. However, I would urge you not to mutate your schedule on my account since my participation at other times would be at best problematical and would hardly justify your taking such trouble. If under other pressures you should alter the proposed date of the meeting please then do let me know and I will then see if I can offer a reasonable probability of my participation.

My hesitancy has no element of modesty, for I do have some difficulty in nominating a surrogate to do precisely what I think you had in mind for my own function. However, I would urge you to give serious consideration either to Luca Cavalli-Sforza (who is now a Professor in this department) or to Walter Bodmer (who is now at Oxford). Their recent monograph "The Genetics of Human Populations" just published by Freeman and Co. is encyclopedic testimony to the breadth of their perspective on human genetics. As I am sure you already would appreciate Cavalli would undoubtedly offer a somewhat broader overview; Bodmer has had some more explicit experience with chromosome classification.

I wish I could also be as specific in recommending names to you for some other areas, for example the pattern analysis of chromosome structure on the computer. With the detail of information now becoming available systematic mathematical approaches will be absolutely essential, but despite a great noise on such questions from work in this country I do not know what to suggest that would go beyond the contributions of your own group. However, this is not a well informed judgement and is certainly on a subject that deserves further inquiry.

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Another group that might be overlooked on first consideration consists of the *Drosophila* cytogeneticists whose experience in exploiting the salivary gland cell chromosomes might offer some useful precedents. That tradition is unfortunately almost completely interrupted but one might still call upon such people as Ed Lewis at Cal Tech. I am sure you will already have thought of encouraging the application of these techniques to the mapping of mouse chromosomes and perhaps one should also think of their potential role in the genetics of economic life-stock. In fact, as I re-read your letter it is obvious that you have already thought about all of these questions.

Sincerely yours,

Joshua Lederberg  
Professor of Genetics

JL/rr