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NAME <i>L. C. Young</i>	TEL. NO. (or code) & EXT.
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NATIONAL AERONAUTICS AND SPACE ADMINISTRATION

WASHINGTON, D.C. 20546

FEB 7 1974

OFFICE TO  
ATTN OF:

MM74-L83

TO: Ames Research Center  
Attn: L/Dr. Harold P. Klein

FROM: MM/NASA Director for Life Sciences

SUBJECT: Comments on Suggested Exchange of US/USSR  
Life Scientists at Ames

I recently had forwarded to me by Code I (International Affairs) a proposal by you to establish an exchange of Soviet and United States Life Scientists. Code I inquired as to my position on this proposal and I have responded by memo, a copy of which is enclosed for your information (Enclosure 1).

Several additional points about this proposal cause me serious concern. First, I am disturbed that a proposal was submitted to NASA Headquarters that would entail up to 6 months' time out of the country for such a key man in your group at Ames without discussing the plan with me prior to submission. At this critical time when we are structuring our Life Sciences research efforts to prepare for the Shuttle and the Life Sciences payloads to be carried on the Shuttle, I have serious reservations whether Dr. David Winter can be spared from your laboratory for such a long period of time. In my view, this becomes an increasing concern when I realize that you will be becoming more involved during this period with the Viking program. I would like to discuss this issue with you and Dave during our visit to Ames later this month.

Second, I am equally disturbed that you would submit a proposal calling for such a major new Life Sciences policy change to Dr. Richard Young, rather than to me as your Headquarters interface. I realize that the proposed Soviet scientist to be nominated to come to Ames is an Exobiologist. The NASA Director for Life Sciences is the primary headquarters contact on this matter, since this does involve a major change in NASA Life Sciences activity and a major shift in the level of US/USSR involvement in the Life Sciences exchange being conducted by the US/USSR Joint Working Group for Space Biology and Medicine.

Third, your proposal to institute this exchange based upon informal discussions with Academician O'Parin is directly counter to the position taken by the Soviets in October 1971. We have made major progress in improving the level and content of the exchange since the Working Group has started to meet. I would want to do nothing to disturb this progress by an inappropriate or untimely move. You will see in my memo to Code I that I firmly believe that no move on this issue of exchanging scientists should be made until we have had an opportunity to discuss the overall subject again as part of the formal agenda of the Working Group. Only after gaining some semblance of their agreement to consider the exchange of scientists would I suggest that a specific proposal be presented.

As you know by this time, I will remain as Chairman of the United States Segment of the Joint Working Group for Space Biology and Medicine after I leave NASA on April 1. I will propose to the Soviets to include a discussion of the overall issue as an agenda item for our next meeting.

Chuck, I regret that I felt a letter reflecting this tone was needed to clear the air. However, I find that we in Life Sciences within the agency often present a rather fragmented face to Senior Management. I have worked very hard to establish a solid and integrated posture for Life Sciences during my tour in Washington. One of my largest problems has been the continuing occurrence of fragmented and uncoordinated actions that have reached top management for decision, only to have to be sent back to me for an opinion. This has made the job of NASA Director for Life Sciences a most difficult one to accomplish and to maintain in a solid integrated posture.

Looking forward to seeing you the last part of the month.



Charles A. Berry, M. D.

Enclosure