

November 30, 1951

Dr. Fred Hoyle
St. John's College
Cambridge, England

Dear Dr. Hoyle:

I would like to write you informally about the possibility of your coming to the California Institute of Technology as a Visiting Professor of Astrophysics for the winter term of 1953. Since my own arrival here in 1948, there has been established a small graduate department in astronomy, in connection with the Mount Wilson and Palomar Observatories. The arrangement I would like you to consider is to visit Pasadena for the term Jan. 1 to March 10, approximately, 1953; and to give a course of lectures on a topic or topics of your choice. Our mutual friend Lyman Spitzer will write you separately concerning a proposed visit to Princeton, beginning in mid-March. Princeton and Cal Tech have worked out an excellent similar arrangement for the last few years. We have already had the pleasure of visits from Stromgren and Cowling, and Oort will be here this January. I hope that it will be possible for you to come next year. Dr. Bacher, head of the Division of Physics, Mathematics and Astronomy here, is writing you formally, for the Institute.

A lecture course here runs for about 10 weeks and it is usual to give three lectures a week of one hour duration. As a possible guide to your thinking on suitable topics, and the stimulation provided you, I should tell you something about the group here. The emphasis in our work is towards research on the borderline between theory and observation. The work of the Observatories as you know is oriented mainly towards studies of extragalactic systems, spectroscopy and solar activity. Our students research is therefore observational and mainly along these lines; this instruction under myself, and now also under Guido Munch, has given them a reasonably good background in stellar atmospheres, interiors and dynamics. They will know a good deal of modern physics. Unfortunately we have no one in theoretical cosmology now; Zwicky, whom you know, is interested in that field, and H.P. Robertson may be back from his present military assignment.

The Observatory group looks forward to the possibility of your coming, and I believe you will have them in your audience often. I am sure that there will be much of mutual benefit and stimulation in your visit. If you do not wish to participate in any observational work of your own, I am sure that inspection of observational material will in itself be of extreme interest. I have been concerned with interstellar material for many years; I feel that the fantastic shapes revealed by large scale photography waits for explanation. The same is true of the remarkable relations established by Baade between dust and stars of high luminosity.

M. Fred Hoyle
St. John's College
Cambridge, England

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I will be glad to help work out any details. There is an excellent faculty club where you could live comfortably. It would give me great personal pleasure if you can consider the Institute's offer, and let us know whether it is likely you can accept.

Sincerely,

Jesse L. Greenstein

FACULTY OF MATHEMATICS
UNIVERSITY OF CAMBRIDGE

Telephone 55313

The Arts School
St John's College, Bene't Street
Cambridge

18th January, 1952.

Dear Greenstein,

Thank you for your letter concerning the visiting Professorship at the California Institute of Technology. My wish is to accept your kind offer, and accordingly I am trying to make arrangements to secure the necessary leave of absence from Cambridge, my negotiations were held up during the Christmas Vacation but I now know sufficient to say that it is very probable that appropriate arrangements can indeed be made. I will know for certain in about another month's time - these matters have to be discussed and passed by various Boards in the University here and that always occasions a considerable delay.

I should like some information on the sort of topics that would be of interest for me to lecture on while in ~~Princeton~~ ^{Pasadena}, the notice would be adequate if this could be settled at the Rome meeting of the I.A.U.

Yours sincerely,

Fred Hoyle.

Dr J.L. Greenstein,
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