

Phaser Telepropulsion Inc. 1888 Century Park East • Suite 1900 • Los Angeles, California 90067

(213) 644-0375

Dr. Edward Stone  
Jet Propulsion Laboratory  
4800 Oak Grove Drive  
Pasadena, CA 91109

October 30, 1997

Re: Formal Recognition to Dr. Michael A. Minovitch  
for Inventing Gravity-Assist Interplanetary Space Travel

Dear Dr. Stone:

During the summer of 1961, while working at JPL as a temporary graduate student in mathematics from UCLA, I invented a new method for exploring the Solar System. It was based upon replacing direct-transfer trajectories to a target planet using reaction propulsion – that was taken for granted at that time – with indirect trajectories passing one or more intermediate planets so that the spacecraft can be propelled by the resulting gravitational interactions. As you know, this method has turned out to be much more practical for reaching the high velocities required for exploring most of the Solar System than the one based upon the traditional reaction propulsion methods laid down by the early pioneers.

Naturally, I assumed that eventually JPL/Caltech would give me proper official credit for the invention, but this has still not happened. At this point, I am taking the position that since JPL has been very busy using my method for exploring most of the Solar System, they have simply forgotten about the inventor. Although I am very happy that my invention was used so much by JPL, I am now quite concerned about the fact that I have still not received proper official credit for it.

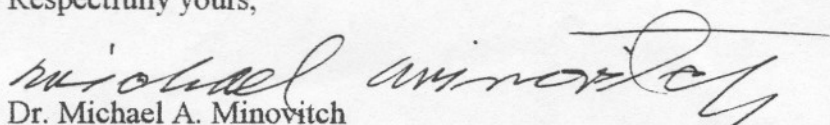
Several members of JPL's technical staff share my concern. Recently, Dr. Sam Dallas and Rex Ridenoure brought this fact to the attention of JPL's Deputy Director, Dr. Larry Dumas. Dr. Dumas has essentially suggested that my claim to the invention should be established by the usual "peer-review" process before JPL/Caltech can give me the award for the invention, which is a very reasonable condition.

I am happy to inform you that this condition was met several years ago. I describe the details in a copy of my letter to Dumas enclosed herein. I believe that it is now appropriate for JPL/Caltech to grant me the award for the invention. I am therefore asking you, as the Director of JPL, to authorize the award as soon as possible.

As I explained in my letter to Dumas, I will be willing to donate any documents and/or artifacts to JPL/Caltech for examination and/or display. I am also willing to give a one-hour presentation to JPL to describe how I invented it (with emphasis on the technical and historical aspects) and show how it opened up the Solar System to exploration with instrumented spacecraft. In fact, I have already prepared a presentation with many slides that should be very interesting.

I look forward to your reply at your earliest convenience.

Respectfully yours,

  
Dr. Michael A. Minovitch

Enclosure: Copy of letter to Dr. Larry Dumas dated October 30, 1997 with 50 enclosures.