

Speech of

**PROFESSOR W. FRENCH ANDERSON**

Co-Winner of the 1994 King Faisal International Prize  
for  
MEDICINE  
(Medical Applications of Genetic Engineering)

Your Royal Highness Prince Abdullah bin Abdul Aziz,  
Your Royal Highnesses,  
Your Excellencies,  
Distinguished Guests,

Thank you for the distinguished honor that you have bestowed upon me. It is gratifying to any researcher to know that his or her work has been recognized not only by his or her colleagues, but by a broader community of friends and supporters as well. The struggle to prevent or cure disease has been an international one, and it is particularly satisfying to this researcher to know that the effort has been appreciated by the international community of humankind.

No researcher accomplishes anything alone; it is only in the cooperative sharing of our work that scientists ever go forward in the quest for knowledge and understanding. Isaac Newton, the brilliant 17th century mathematician, one noted that he had not learned his insights in a vacuum. "I stand," he said, "on the shoulders of my predecessors." The generosity of the King Faisal International Prize Committee will allow me to continue to stand on the shoulders of my predecessors and to become one of the predecessors on whose shoulders future generations of scientists may stand.

Human gene therapy is still in its infancy. Future gene therapists may totally discard our work, or they may discover that it led in the wrong direction. Or they may find that it provides a solid foundation for future therapeutic successes. It doesn't matter--what does matter is that we now, in 1994, are laying the groundwork from which those

future gene therapists will work. This early work must be done, and be done well, by people who are dedicated to the idea of advancing the field for the use of all humankind.

Historically, we have seen that scientists have often transcended the constraints of political and social differences, and even of warfare, in order to exchange ideas and information with each other, and in the late twentieth century it has become the norm for researchers from many different countries to collaborate on research projects in order to advance science and benefit humankind. In the name of peace we come together to share our knowledge, and in the name of peace we disseminate that knowledge to all peoples the world over. Your generous recognition of my effort to advance the field of human gene therapy for the benefit of all humankind will enable my colleagues and me to continue our march toward that goal. May our children and their children be freed from the ravages of cancer and other dread diseases. I thank you again, and wish all of you a happy and healthy future.