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Tuesday, November 14, 1978

Memo to File - Lunch conversation with Peter Williams
on Tuesday.

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Williams said he was rather embarrassed about the response to the application for the renovation of Bill Trager's lab but he felt that the Wellcome Trust ought concentrate on those things that it can do best to the exclusion of other possible sources of support.

Reese

I told him that I had to agree with that approach, that I was well able to conscientiously support Reese's application, that there were particular difficulties in finding funds for renovation but that it would be better to start with a more strategic approach.

After some conversation we concluded that fellowship support on an international and interdisciplinary scale was probably of the utmost importance and that we would have no difficulty in welcoming scholars from Great Britain. He indicated that although on the face of it it might be better to have a broader framework that he would like to start with one institution and that he would welcome an application from the Rockefeller University for the support of a limited number of fellows to be trained in such a way as to become the molecular parasitologist of the next generation. He is well aware that there are several laboratories here that could receive such individuals very happily.

CC: Rux

I explained the problems that would arise if such appointments were funded only with respect to the stipends of the fellows and after some education about our financing system he agreed that we could attach a percentage for indirect costs but that we could not do that and at the same time get funds for technicians, supplies etc. I indicated that from an institutional standpoint it would be better to get the indirect cost funding: we could probably get the supporting direct costs from existing research grants from national sources.

He will expect to get from me a draft proposal outlining the kind of people that we are looking for and the kind of product that would then result. We are thinking of senior fellowships and we should perhaps look into what the Wellcome Trust is already supporting in that general direction.

We are thinking generally speaking of senior postdocs who will have had a qualification either in basic biology or in parasitology and would be able to come here in order to broaden their training. One of the overt side effects of this arrangement would be to add prestige to the new discipline and facilitate the careers of the selected fellows when they return home. Apparently that is something that could not in practice be readily worked out even as between the London School and University College.

Williams also reminded me that Rockefeller support had been instrumental in establishing both the London School and the Clinical Sciences Laboratories of was it University or Kings College!

At some later time we can and should consider the extension of these ideas to candidates from third world countries but we would be in somewhat of a dilemma to choose those circumstances where there was a laboratory for them to go back to.

Williams also understood the need for the laboratory workshop arrangements having the Phage summer courses at Cold Spring Harbor as the prototype and he will be in touch with Ken Warren about the way in which Wellcome and Rockefeller can get together on setting up such situations. At the very least the Wellcome ought to support some junior fellowships for people to attend those courses. Perhaps that is something that WHO and UNESCO can also get into for that matter.