

September 10, 1962

Dr. H. F. Robinson, Director
Institute of Biological Sciences
North Carolina State College
Raleigh, North Carolina

Dear Cotton:

The check covering my out-of-pocket expenses for the June trip to Raleigh was received this past week. Your letter of July 20, stating that you would find it necessary to construct a set of expense figures and process it without my approval if you did not receive from me within a few days the actual account with the required ticket stub, crossed in the mail with my letter to you containing the requested items. I realize that the wording of this statement was intentionally facetious, but it also was intended to carry a message, as indicated in the second paragraph of your letter. The long delay thereafter in completing the processing of the account, together with the statement in your letter of September 4 expressing a "hope" that reimbursement on a faster schedule in the future could be arranged, has served to emphasize the degree of anomaly that has evolved with regard to financial support for my participation in the Latin American project at the North Carolina State College.

I was much disturbed to learn, during our luncheon conversation in June, that the Rockefeller Foundation had indicated to you its unwillingness to extend funds to cover my expenses in the project. I have had time since then to ponder the full significance of this attitude of the Foundation. It seems incredible to me that the Rockefeller Foundation could launch a project of this magnitude, requiring the services of a person with my experience and training, that it could request these services of me and accept them on a gratuitous basis, and then would renege on its previously expressed commitment to support me to the extent of paying the out-of-pocket expenses that my participation in the project would incur.

I would like to assure you that I fully recognize the embarrassment this decision of the Foundation has caused you, and to express to you my sincere appreciation of your efforts to cover the Foundation's obligation with funds derived from the College that are earmarked for honoraria. I would find it difficult to agree to this solution for it would imply, both on and off the books, that I was accepting money for my services, meager as the amounts for these might be. This would completely alter my position in the project. You should know, also, that I consider the obligation placed on you to fish for funds to pay my expenses to be both undignified and unjust. Again, sometime in the future, the fish may not bite! We would then be faced with the same problem. Also, I consider that it is equally undignified and unjust for the Foundation to expect me to depend on such fishing excursions.

If the Foundation is willing to expend many thousands of dollars in bringing four Latin American Fellows and their families to Raleigh and support them during their stay there, but is unwilling to expend any funds to cover the out-of-pocket expenses that I would incur in fulfilling my part in this project, then

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I, in turn, am unwilling to continue giving my time and energies, gratuitously, to its project. The indifferent attitude of the Foundation towards my welfare in this project is amply demonstrated. Regardless of mitigating factors that may be responsible for this, the result has produced shabby terms for my participation in the project that are an affront to me personally. I should not be expected to accept them. They have already undermined my enthusiasm for this project to such an extent that repair is unlikely.

I am sorry indeed, Cotton, that such an extraordinary situation has arisen. It is quite unfair to me and thoroughly indefensible.

Sincerely yours,

BMcC:af

Barbara McClintock