

UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA  
LABORATORY OF PHYSIOLOGICAL HYGIENE  
MINNEAPOLIS 14

Jo. Scan

STADIUM, GATE 27

November 12, 1958

Dr. Henry Blackburn  
c/o Dr. Ratko Buzina  
Central Institute of Hygiene  
Zagreb, Yugoslavia

John A. Keys

Dear Henry:

Thanks much for your most informative letter written from Rome. I was afraid that you were going to be loaded with an impossible task to cover everything that should be covered in the time available to you in Italy and your letter confirms this. However, I gather that you have had a rewarding as well as exhausting experience and I am sure you have done wonders. And, as usual, Flaminio does a tremendous job of organizing when he puts himself to it. I must arrange to bring him to the States for a few months some time soon. He is awfully anxious to have another contact and I think we owe it to him. Incidentally, his mother quite seriously asked me several times couldn't I find a wife for him in America.

The changes in the Nicotera material are interesting and they emphasize, as you note, that we need longer strips than one or two beats and we must have absolutely clear and iron-clad techniques. Your putting together a cookbook for criteria and techniques is actually overdue and I am delighted that you are undertaking it. Then, of course, there is a certain amount of missionary work to do which I gather you contributed mightily towards in Italy.

I had only a small glance at Kagan's working paper for WHO but I was most unhappy about it and about the way in which simple opinion is written up and offered as a serious document. I hope this working paper will not be taken seriously and I am quite sure it will not see print as a WHO document. But something must be done to forestall such developments and to get things on a more sensible and genuinely scientific basis. It is barely possible you could help in this direction by stopping off in Geneva but the main difficulty is that there is really almost no one in Geneva to talk with who knows anything about the problems and the whole technical field.

If you go to Geneva you must make some kind of appointments before hand and unfortunately the only contacts I can suggest are with R. C. Burgess in the Section on Nutrition and Dr. Candau himself. If Dr. Osler Peterson is still at Geneva (Section on Chronic Disease or Public Health, I think) you should see him also.

In regard to the position with WHO which Dr. Watt mentioned at Brussels, I believe the actual place of work is more apt to be Copenhagen than Geneva and I fear the job is simply an office activity of attempting to develop some ideas for WHO and selling these to the rest of the organizations. In other words I am sure there is no prospect of contact with research, teaching, or medical practice. I am sure you would do a good job there but I would hate to see you get involved in what would undoubtedly be a pretty frustrating situation, at least for a time. But if you go to Geneva you might inquire and see what you can discover.

Your idea of going to England for a few days on the way home seems very reasonable to me and I would undertake to find money to cover any extra expenses incurred thereby. There is a sizeable amount of antagonism to all our ideas among some of the English workers and I am sure you could reduce this and help to bring about some better understanding.

I shall write to Poppi at once but I can tell you the position as I see it at the moment. We have almost no free money which I could simply transfer for the support of the work suggested for the region of Bologna. Moreover, I am not at all happy about starting another program with as little preparation as was the case in Marche. Besides the job of rounding up the men and conducting the clinical examinations, there is a major problem of characterizing the diet. I am all in favor of the study in the region of Bologna in due course, but I believe we should not attempt to get it on the road as soon as this winter or even in the spring. In any case if we get the support for the big over-all program I would certainly include provision for work in the Bologna area and the arrangement that Poppi take the lead there.

I shall certainly write to Sanborn and Company to express appreciation for the excellent cooperation in Paris and I shall send you a copy of the letter when it is sent off.

At the moment I am in the midst of the meetings of the Research Committee of the American Heart Association and this letter is being dictated early in the morning before the beginning of today's session. I wish you and Yaska were here to meet the committee members but actually we have almost no contact with anyone outside of the committee during these five days of work.

In regard to the accounting for the University of Minnesota, I am going to propose a flat per diem rate in dollars and if that is acceptable to the business office then we will not worry about rates of conversion of

currency. If this is not acceptable, then I think the rate of conversion will certainly have to be at 400 dinars to the dollar even though some exchange was made at the different rate.

Thanks for the receipt. I may ask you to make it out as received from me because actually Flaminio was only the transmitting agent and the money I gave him came out of my personal pocket. I shall, of course, recover from the university in due course.

Everyone here seems to be well and in good spirits, but I have had no opportunity to find out actually what is going on. We all send you and the team best wishes. I shall write separate letters to Yaska and Ratko in a day or two.

As ever,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read 'Ancel Keys', with a large, stylized initial 'A'.

Ancel Keys

AK/lf