



OFFICE OF DIRECTOR
VENEREAL DISEASE RESEARCH LABORATORY
U. S. MARINE HOSPITAL

FEDERAL SECURITY AGENCY
U. S. PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICE
STATEN ISLAND, NEW YORK



May 5, 1947

Dr. J. C. Cutler
P. O. Box 383
Guatemala City, Guatemala

Dear John: (Through Dr. Josphe S. Spoto)

I was more than pleased to have your last note together with the one from Portnoy. They cause me to feel assured that the work in Guatemala will not have to undergo the agony of personnel changes. Please feel sure that we will continue to do anything possible to make the work more agreeable and more profitable for the members of the unit.

A new angle has developed in regard to which I hope that you and Doctor Spoto will make a mental note and then destroy this letter. Doctor Van Slyke made a hurried trip from Washington recently to tell us that Harry Eagle is about to complain to the Surgeon General that I have not been extremely enthusiastic about allowing him to enter the Guatemala study. As you may know, he has done considerable animal work in prophylaxis in syphilis by use of penicillin and can only prove the thesis by a human experiment. He discussed the matter with me several weeks ago but I could not see wherein a study of that kind would have other than an academic value if an injection technic was employed. I thought it would be of still less importance if an oral preparation of penicillin was to be studied as a prophylactic agent. Further, I do not care much about having anyone join the study who could not share in the responsibility for the entire program. We are scheduled to have a meeting in Washington later in the month, at which time the entire matter will be discussed. I shall inform you as to the outcome.

We also gather the impression that Doctor Heller would feel considerably more secure if we were to set up an advisory group of leading figures in the world of science to serve as a background for the study. I have never been a believer in this type of thing and I do not think that an advisory committee would help us greatly, but we might have to defer to political expediency. There are several men whom I would not mind being associated with the work. There are several other leading figures who, I think, would be a distinct detriment. Will let you know how it all comes out as soon as possible.

CTLR_0001243

Dr. J. C. Cutler

May 5, 1947

Again, with kindest regards to all, I am,

Sincerely yours,


J. F. Mahoney
Medical Director
USPHS

P.S. We are returning the manuscript of the paper which you presented to the Guatemalan Medical Society and which has been approved for publication.

JFM

JFM:tcw