

TR *copy*

6th. August, 1955.

Mr. H. Rowan Gaither Jr.,
President,
Ford Foundation,
655 Madison Avenue,
New York 21,
N.Y.

Dear Mr. Gaither,

In December, 1952, the Ford Foundation was approached for support of the scientific work of the Montreal Neurological Institute, and a brochure stating its needs sent to Mr. Bernard Berelson. It was considered at that time that our application did not come within the terms of reference of the objectives of the Ford Foundation. In view of the recent public announcement that the Ford Foundation has allocated a sum of money for research concerning mental illness, we hope this application can now be reconsidered.

We need an endowment of \$500,000.00 for the establishment of research fellowships in our scientific laboratories, where continuing studies of fundamental aspects of the function of the nervous system are under way.

We believe that major advances in the prevention and cure of mental illness will come through long range, uninterrupted, basic study of the nervous system, such as can be carried on only in well equipped laboratories in which the basic neurologic disciplines are closely integrated with each other, and with clinical problems presented by patients suffering from psychiatric and neurologic diseases. Support of basic research in nervous system function and dysfunction, in our opinion, provides the type of investment in the field of mental illness that is most apt to reap important dividends.

There is at this Institute a unique opportunity to study the functions of the human brain through the abundant flow of patients with focal cerebral seizures requiring operation under local anesthesia. Physiological observations made at the operating table almost daily give clues of fundamental importance that furnish guidance for laboratory investigation of basic physiologic nature into the function of the brain. A similar flow of patients with other types of neurological diseases, tumors, demyelinating diseases etc. furnish a similar guidance for basic pathologic and chemical investigations.

In the brochure mentioned above, the needs of the scientific and clinical divisions of the Institute were described. During the past three years some of these have been provided for. The construction of a new wing, generously provided for by Mr. J.W. McConnell and some of his friends in Montreal, has doubled both the laboratory space and the hospital space. Additional endowment, also from Mr. McConnell, has provided for the minimum basic running expenses of three of the Institute's five research laboratories, namely the Laboratory of Neuropathology, the Laboratory of Neurophysiology, and the Laboratory of Neuroanatomy and Medical Neuropathology. The basic running expenses of the fourth, the Laboratory of Neurochemistry, are provided for in perpetuity by a grant from the Canadian Donner Foundation. The fifth, the Laboratory for Research into Multiple Sclerosis, lives a dangerous existence on a yearly grant from the Canadian Multiple Sclerosis Society. All five of these laboratories have been well equipped with instruments purchased with special grants derived largely from the Canadian Government.

It has been necessary, however, to finance the professional personnel of these laboratories in large part by means of yearly grants for special projects.

The stability of permanent endowment is essential to maintain the highly skilled and specialized staffs of these laboratories, and to promote efficient operation of the laboratories. We need an endowment of \$500,000.00 for establishment of research fellowships. The yearly income from such an endowment would insure the support of the research fellows on whom the productiveness of the research laboratory largely depends. We would pro-

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pose that this money be used for junior or senior fellowships ranging from \$2,000.00 to \$6,000.00 or \$8,000.00 yearly, depending on the need of the laboratories at the time. The holder of such an award could be designated "Ford Foundation Fellow or Scholar".

The establishment of the fellowships described above on a permanent basis would be of great importance in promoting fundamental studies of nervous system function from which we believe the really major advances in the field of mental disease will come.

We would be pleased to amplify this application, or to meet with representatives of the Ford Foundation, if further information is desired.

Sincerely yours,

Wilder Penfield,

Director

Theodore Rasmussen

Professor of Neurology and Neurosurgery and Deputy Director.