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THE ROCKEFELLER FOUNDATION

49 WEST 49th STREET, NEW YORK 20

THE HUMANITIES

CHARLES B. FAHS, DIRECTOR
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CABLE ADDRESS:
ROCKFOUND, NEW YORK

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COLUMBUS 5-8100

February 14, 1956

Dear Dr. Reyes:

Thank you for your "Memorandum Sobre El Colegio
de Mexico" received in Mr. Fahs' absence from the office.
He will see this upon his return in about ten days.

Sincerely yours,



E. Ruth Marler
Secretary to
Mr. Fahs

Dr. Alfonso Reyes
President
El Colegio de Mexico
Durango, 93
Mexico 7, D.F.
Mexico

MEMORANDUM

F

I. NEED FOR A CENTER

1. It seems to be generally agreed that an enlightened and articulate public opinion would, more than most other things, help the world successfully to emerge from its crisis of many years standing. But in Mexico there does not exist, nor has there ever existed, an institution for the specific purpose of creating that opinion and keeping it informed through lectures and public discussions, teaching and research, the publication of books and journals, etc.

2. In Mexico there occurs the curious —not to say pathetic— phenomenon of the average citizen who, while anxious to know what is going on in the world, neither knows how to obtain the necessary information nor who can furnish it. In Mexico international issues are not discussed in parliament; the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, by nature, makes very little information available to the public; and the press is deplorably deficient in comments (if not in news) on the major international problems. It will suffice to mention that Excelsior, Mexico's most important daily newspaper, has only one commentator on international affairs on its permanent staff, and the possibility of his specializing may be judged by the fact that he is, at the same time, the only book critic. Excelsior is therefore obliged to satisfy its readers by reprinting editorials for the North American public by such columnists as Lippman or Dorothy Thompson.

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3. The result of this situation is that the Secretariat of Foreign Affairs recruits personnel for its foreign service by means of a system of examinations which it gives in accordance with questionnaires drawn up by its own staff for each subject. The examinations cover subjects such as international law public and private, constitutional and administrative law, world and Mexican history, geography, economics, etc.

4. Another result of this situation should be pointed out: certain circles within the Mexican government are deeply concerned about the fact that at present there is not a single official of Mexican nationality in the United Nations Secretariat, which is attributed to the lack of an institution to prepare candidates for this kind of a position.

5. The necessity of finding some remedy to this situation is already beginning to be clearly demonstrated. In the last year, three young men —intelligent, sincere and inadequately trained— have commenced writing on international questions for the daily newspapers Excelsior and Novedades. In spite of their lack of preparation, they have enjoyed a disproportionate success, which can only be explained by the public's demand for this type of reading material. The Secretariat of Foreign Affairs, for its part, has recently appointed a commission composed of specially qualified foreign service officers and professors of the Mexican National University; and it has entrusted to this commission the task of revising the Foreign Service Law, in particular the recruiting system, namely, the preparation to be expected of the candidates and where this

may be received. The Ministry of Foreign Affairs is likewise concerned about the need to train young people for successful participation in international organizations.

6. It may be stated that this situation exists to varying degrees in each and every Latin American country. Argentina is exceptional with the daily newspaper La Prensa. Brazil, secure in the great tradition of its Itamarati, seemed, until a few years ago, unaware of any need to find new personnel recruitment procedures for its foreign service, but today it is commonly accepted that the modern world requires new methods.

7. It seems, therefore, necessary and timely to create a center of international studies to satisfy the requirements of, if not all the Latin American countries, at least the eight or ten most important, without, naturally, excluding any country. The experience of an institution like the CEMLA (Center of Latin American Monetary Studies) which has received Foundation aid and which has existed for seven years is encouraging:

II. NATURE OF THE CENTER

1. The Center of International Studies might have these activities:

a) The first, in order of time, by reason of being the easiest, would be the creation of a very important section within the library of El Colegio de Mexico dedicated to periodical publications --both official and private--, of books and documents, which would, of course, be available to the general reader and which would serve as a basis for teaching

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and research.

b) The immediate organization of lectures and short courses open to the general public, which would serve to publicize this new and specialized institution.

c) The most difficult activity to organize is, surely, that of teaching and research.

III. THE TASK OF TEACHING

1. Type of Student

a) He should certainly be a graduate student; but he may have only a bachelor's degree (in philosophy, or the social sciences) or a master's degree (in arts, political sciences, economics or law).

b) He should be sufficiently acquainted with the English language to be able not only to read but to understand oral explanations and to express himself —verbally or in writing— be it imperfectly.

c) Students may be recruited from Argentina, Brazil, Colombia, Chile, Mexico, Peru and Uruguay, although always keeping open the possibility of candidates being presented by even the smallest counties. The Center would be willing to listen to suggestions from the university authorities of each country and from the ministries of Foreign Affairs; but the final decision in the selection of the scholarship students should be left entirely to the Center, so that they may be chosen solely for academic reasons and not by political or personal recommendations.

2. Nature of the Teaching

a) It is, of course, advisable to compare the experience

of four or five European and North American institutions which have specialized in the teaching of international affairs; but the decisive factor should be the peculiar circumstances of the Center's creation and operation.

b) The following suggestions are only examples of what should be the criterion. The Center's teaching and research should be orientated towards contemporary problems, those of today. This means doing away with traditional courses such as Europe's balance of power after the fall of Napoleon, or even subjects as recent as Bismarkian diplomacy and Europe's balance of power. A course on the history of the British Empire or the colonization of Africa should be discarded and substituted by courses referring to the present state of the British commonwealth or Africa's nationalist movements.

3. Nonetheless, recognizing the fact that no contemporary situation can be explained without knowing something about the preceding situations and problems, it is proposed that the teaching of contemporary international problems be introduced by condensed and intensive courses on the history of countries or regions. For example, prior to a possible course on present-day India and its immediate international future, there should be presented a very compact course on the history of Indian civilization and culture. Another course on African civilizations should precede courses on African nationalist movements and the economic and political problems which they create.

a) This criterion, strictly speaking, should be adopted even in the case of teaching and studying such apparently more well-known subjects as the United States, England, Western

Europe or Latin America. If it is recalled that no school in Mexico either teaches or studies the history of the United States, it can be easily understood why a general but substantial course on the history of the United States should be given in order to be qualified to explain international problems relative to the United States of today.

b) The dominating criterion of actuality would result in giving a prominent place to the study of the Soviet Union, which would not occur were the teaching to be organized along traditional historical lines. Conversely, a historical study of 19th century international affairs would have to give Austria an importance which it neither has today nor will have in the immediate future. Likewise, international agencies and multilateral diplomacy will figure significantly in teaching programs.

d) Another result is that the professors who give certain courses should, wherever practical, belong to the nationality of the area under discussion. An English or a North American professor might be invited to give the course on India's history of civilization and culture; but an Indian professor is preferable for the course on contemporary Indian problems, be they political, economic or cultural. Although an English professor like Brogan might be considered for the explanation of contemporary problems in the United States, a North American professor should be chosen.

IV. MANNER OF OPERATION

1. Students

a) A small and limited group should be formed of fifteen

or twenty students from the principal Latin American countries.

b) They should all be elected after a scrupulous examination of their personal background and a comparison of their qualifications with other candidates from their own and other countries.

c) They would be committed to devoting all their time to study and it would be understood that the Center reserves the right to cancel, at any moment, a student's scholarship if he is found responsible for unsatisfactory work. This full-time and exclusive dedication to study would be compensated for by giving the student a scholarship permitting him to live modestly but without material discomfort. The scholarships will be granted for a year, but with the understanding that they would be renewed for two more one-year periods until the conclusion of the study cycle.

d) An additional stimulus might be offered to the outstanding students of the group: a travel fellowship which would permit them to go to the country or region in which they specialized, visit its institutions and make contact with the persons they consider most interesting.

2. Professors

a) Except for courses on political science, international law and international organizations, and Latin American geography and history, the professors should be brought from abroad. They would be offered their travel expenses and a salary adequate to their maintaining in Mexico a living standard similar to that which they enjoyed in their own country. They would be contracted, broadly speaking, for a semester or an academic year, so that they would actually be visiting and not permanent professors.

3. Direction

a) The Director of the Center would be the permanent element of union and supervision and he should be contracted for a minimum of three years, with the understanding that he devote all his time to the institution. In Mexico there are at least four possible candidates for this post who would appear to guarantee the success of the undertaking.

4. Cost

a) In order to give an idea of the possible cost of this experiment, it may be advisable to make an initial and very rough estimate, which is as follows:

Purchase of books, journals and - - documentary material, initial expense.	\$ 10,000
16 three-year scholarships to students	46,080
Professor, salaries.	69,120
Travel expenses.	24,000
	<u>\$ 149,200</u>

II.- La Filosofía

1) En la rama de filosofía parece que la labor de preparación no es por ahora urgente en la capital del país, pues existe, a más de un buen número de maestros maduros (Gaos, Ramos, García Maynez, etc.), un grupo de jóvenes inteligentes, bien preparados y que, en su mayoría, han pasado inclusive por la experiencia de viajar y estudiar en el extranjero. Algunos de estos jóvenes no han tenido cabida en la Universidad, y si entran en ella, su carrera tendrá que ser lenta, en parte porque los recursos de la Universidad son limitados, y en parte porque, aun cuando no cabe duda de que estos filósofos son una de las mejores esperanzas de México, son todavía jóvenes, no han tenido gran experiencia en la enseñanza y su obra escrita es todavía desproporcionada a sus méritos y su nombre.

2) Por otra parte, hay en las universidades de provincia una falta completa de profesores de filosofía, con la circunstancia desafortunada de que algunas de ellas (las de Nuevo León, Guanajuato y Guadalajara, por ejemplo) han creado recientemente facultades de filosofía y letras sin tener el profesorado adecuado ni haber hecho planes para asegurarlo. Se corre entonces el riesgo de que una reforma bien intencionada fracase en breve, aplazándose así el desarrollo de la filosofía en todo el país.

III.- El Primer Proyecto

1) El Colegio de México cree que podría prestar un servicio eficaz a las humanidades en México si se encarga de estudiar las necesidades de esas universidades de provincia y los deseos de estos jóvenes filósofos, a fin de que vayan a prestar temporalmente sus servicios en ellas con provecho propio y de las instituciones que sirvan.

2) No valdría la pena, sin embargo, hacer este experimento si se limitara a la filosofía. Habría que ampliarlo a las otras dos ramas principales de las humanidades, las letras y la historia, pues las necesidades de las universidades de provincia son iguales en cuanto a éstas. Este sería el primer proyecto que presentaría El Colegio de acuerdo con el Anexo 1.

IV.- Las Letras

1) La parte débil del proyecto anterior es la sección de Letras, pues en este campo no ha habido casi renovación en México en los últimos veinte o veinticinco años. Por eso no sólo conviene, sino que urge, emprender una obra enérgica de preparación de profesores e investigadores. El Colegio, en rigor, hizo un primer esfuerzo y precisamente con la ayuda de la Fundación. De ese esfuerzo quedó un grupo reducido de jóvenes talentosos, diligentes, que trabajan para mantener la Nueva Revista de Filología Hispánica y que siguen estudiando y comparando sus progresos en reuniones semanarias de seminario.

2) Su preparación es, sin embargo, incompleta, y en todo caso, no se ha llegado al sistema necesario para preparar nuevos elementos, que los hay y están deseosos de encontrar un sitio propicio para hacer de las letras su vocación profesional definitiva. Para acometer esta empresa importante y urgente, El Colegio presenta un segundo proyecto en el Anexo 2.

V.- La Historia

1) En materia de historia El Colegio presentó, y la Fundación aprobó, un proyecto de investigación sobre Localización y Estimación de las Fuentes

para la Historia Contemporánea de México, que se iniciará el 1 de julio de 1857 y que concluirá el 30 de junio de 1959. En él trabajarán cuatro graduados de El Colegio de México, mientras algunos otros saldrán al extranjero a redondear su preparación.

2) No parece, pues, prudente iniciar nada nuevo mientras no se concluyan la publicación de la Historia Moderna de México y el proyecto de las Fuentes para la Historia Contemporánea. No obstante, si, como es de esperarse, los resultados de las Fuentes son satisfactorios, desde ahora puede pensarse en crear para 1959 un Seminario de Historia Contemporánea de México cuyo objetivo sería investigar, redactar y publicar la historia de México de 1911 a 1950. Este proyecto se beneficiaría de la experiencia lograda en el Seminario de Historia Moderna de México y de los resultados del estudio sobre las Fuentes; por consiguiente, habría que darle desde un principio las proporciones necesarias: su costo sería considerable, y habría que hacer la provisión de fondos para períodos de cinco años y no de dos.

3) Una variante muy importante podría señalarse desde ahora para subrayar el interés del proyecto. En Estados Unidos sobre todo, pero también en dos o tres países latinoamericanos y en Francia, el estudio de la historia contemporánea de México se ha convertido en una verdadera especialidad, y por eso cabría pensar si el proyectado Seminario del Colegio de México no podría convertirse en un lugar de trabajo que atrajera por igual a mexicanos y extranjeros.

VI.- El Proyecto Nuevo

1) Quizás la falta más sensible que se advierte en el cuadro de las instituciones educativas de México es un centro ágil, vivo, que enseñe la historia y los problemas del mundo de nuestros días. Asombra que no ha-

ya habido jamás una escuela en México donde se enseñara alguna vez un curso, por superficial que sea, sobre la civilización de China o Japón, del Asia Sudoriental, de la India o del Medio Oriente. Tampoco se ha enseñado la de Estados Unidos, y los cursos de historia de la América Latina no pueden ser más superficiales de lo que son. Y si esto pasa con la historia —al fin una disciplina tradicional en México—, ¿qué podrá decirse de la política, de la economía y de la sociedad de esos países? No parece que pueda haber una sola razón que retarde por más tiempo la creación de un centro de Estudios de esta naturaleza, pues, por una parte, las comunicaciones modernas han encogido al mundo a un grado en que es físicamente imposible ignorar lo que pasa en el llamado Lejano Oriente, y que para México, por cierto, es un Occidente bastante cercano; y por otra parte, es incuestionable que la presencia de ese gran grupo de países pesa cada vez más en el mundo, de modo que no puede ser ya indiferente la suerte que corra Indonesia, la India o Pakistán, Egipto o el Líbano.

2) Por supuesto que esta situación de ignorancia o indiferencia no es privativa de México, sino de toda la América Latina, sin excepción alguna. Y hay que convenir también en que —con la excepción de Estados Unidos— estos nuevos países que nosotros ignoramos, nos ignoran a nosotros en igual grado. Se comprende que a todos interesa salir de esta ignorancia general y recíproca. El plan destinado a remediarla acaso podría contar, no sólo con la simpatía y la ayuda de México y de Estados Unidos, sino con la de los principales países de la América Latina y de Asia y África del Norte.

3) La idea sería crear en el Colegio de México un Centro de Estudios Internacionales al que acudieran jóvenes becarios de México y de seis u ocho países de la América Latina (Brasil, Uruguay, Argentina, Chile, Perú, y Colombia, por ejemplo), en grupos de diez a quince, y que estudiarían en el Centro durante tres años continuos. Al cabo de ellos —es de espe-

rarse— podrán ganarse la vida como periodistas, profesores, funcionarios de organismos internacionales, o como miembros del servicio exterior de sus respectivos países. El Centro tendría además una actividad extra-escolar que creara una opinión pública ilustrada acerca de estas cuestiones internacionales, y debería intentar cuanto antes la publicación de una revista trimestral como medio de extender su obra a todos los países de la América Latina, de publicar colaboraciones de los países que llamaremos "nuevos" y servir de medio de canje para asegurar publicaciones extranjeras similares.

4) Un proyecto de esta naturaleza exige necesariamente recursos económicos cuantiosos (un cálculo muy grueso indica una cifra de 35,000 dólares anuales), porque se trata de traer a México becarios de unos seis países de la América Latina, porque todos los profesores —exceptuando los encargados de los cursos de historia contemporánea de México y de América Latina— tendrían que venir del extranjero, y porque habría que pensar en un plan de nueve años para crear tres grupos de graduados (1959-61, 1960-62 y 1961-63). En fin, por tratarse de una empresa enteramente nueva, se necesitaría principiar desde el principio: por ejemplo, habrá que crear una biblioteca, sin la cual, por supuesto, el proyecto no podría marchar.

5) Es de suponer, sin embargo, que el proyecto pueda contar con fondos de Estados Unidos y México y de todos o los principales países interesados. Habrá que confiar, por ejemplo, en que el gobierno y las universidades de Estados Unidos, Japón, Filipinas, Indonesia, India, Pakistán, etc., puedan obsequiar al Centro publicaciones oficiales, libros y revistas, que alivien el costo de crear una biblioteca y de mantenerla al día. Es de esperarse también que, si el proyecto despierta bastante interés, algunos de los países sudamericanos puedan y quieran sufragar todos o parte de los gastos de sus respectivos becarios. Y es de esperarse, en

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fin, que países como la India o Japón puedan costear todos o parte de los gastos de los profesores suyos que vengan a México a servir algún curso, así como ofrecer bolsas de viaje a los estudiantes sobresalientes.

6) Lo importante por ahora es que la Fundación resuelva si, en principio, le interesa explorar las posibilidades y costo del proyecto, que en cuanto al Colegio, se tiene ya la seguridad de su interés y de una aportación económica modesta en relación al costo total, pero importante dados sus recursos. (Se piensa en una suma de 10,000 dólares anuales para un período de nueve años.)

7) Si la Fundación resuelve que, en principio, le interesa explorar las posibilidades y costo del proyecto, parece que los siguientes pasos serían:

a) Que la Fundación ponga en contacto al Colegio de México con algunas instituciones de Estados Unidos y de Europa que tengan experiencia en esta clase de empresas, para establecer cuanto antes un posible programa de los cursos y otras actividades del Centro, así como la naturaleza y magnitud de la biblioteca;

b) Aprovechar el viaje de Daniel Cosío Villegas al Asia, Lejano y Cercano Oriente, para explorar la naturaleza y grado de cooperación de los principales países que visite;

c) Idear la forma de hacer una exploración semejante en los principales países de la América Latina.

ANEXO NUMERO 1

Proyecto de Préstamo de Profesores de Humanidades a
Tres Universidades de Provincia

	Año

9 Profesores a \$240 cada uno	\$ 21,600
Para la compra de libros y revistas	4,500
	\$ 26,100
Por tres años	\$ 78,300
A cargo de la Fundación	\$ 52,200
A cargo Universidades Provincia	\$ 26,100

ANEXO NUMERO 2

Proyecto sobre la Sección de Letras

1 Profesor, jefe de la Sección	\$ 3,840
2 Profesores visitantes (2 meses cada uno)	1,280
3 Investigadores mayores	5,760
4 Estudiantes avanzados	2,880
4 Estudiantes principiantes	2,304
Gastos de viaje	3,000
Libros y revistas	2,000
Costo anual	\$ 21,064
Costo por tres años	\$ 63,192
A	
A cargo de la Fundación	\$ 42,128
A cargo del Colegio	\$ 21,064

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Mr. Charles B. Fahs
The Rockefeller Foundation
49 West 49th Street
New York 20, N. Y.
U. S. A.

Your good letter of July 26.

Trying to be useful, I tried to get Don Alfonso's views, but I failed first because I had to go to lecture to Guadalajara and then because Don Alfonso is now out of town, apparently for quite a while.

I hope your secretary saved for you the copy of my last book, Estados Unidos contra Porfirio Díaz, which I sent while you were abroad. I also hope that you will shortly receive a copy of volume III of Historia Moderna de México in which you may see three new young historians coming out with extensive and convincing works.

Daniel Cosío Villegas

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*A Daniel:
 Encuentro:
 tenemos que hablar de
 esto*

...Must I give up any possibility of developing a project by which we might contribute to more effective long-term development for the Colegio? Or is there some line of approach which I have not had the imagination to see and which might lead to more productive results? Don Alfonso has always been most cordial and friendly, and if I have not had from him proposals on which I could act here I have had to assume that this was because of difficulties at his end of which I am only partially aware. I do not wish to press for projects which do not seem desirable or feasible from the Mexican end. On the other hand, I would not wish to have opportunities missed simply because of misunderstanding on my part. If you can give me any advice it will be much appreciated.

I have just had a letter from Savoie Lottinville in which he speaks most appreciatively of your help to him in Mexico City. We owe you our thanks as well.

Alfonso: Este es el párrafo de una carta de

Fuchs, recibida antes.

Yo puedo arreglar melos para no contestar; pero no podría contestar sin las opiniones e instrucciones de Ud.

Aguardo su recordo. Daniel

Alfonso Tenenemos que hablar


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CABLE ADDRESS:
ROCKFOUND, NEW YORK

TELEPHONE:
COLUMBUS 5-8100

October 1, 1956

Dear Don Alfonso:

I am now thinking once more of a winter trip to Mexico. According to present plans, I expect to arrive in Mexico on the evening of December 8 and to stay until the 18th. I hope to be accompanied by Dr. John P. Harrison who is joining our staff this fall and will be concerned particularly with Latin America.

Ever since our discussions last January, I have had very much on my mind the question of future help to the Colegio de Mexico. Since I have not heard from you, however, I have had the impression that there are problems in this connection which were either unforeseen when we talked or else which I did not at that time understand. I have no reason, of course, to press for any action which seems inopportune to you, and the question does not need to come up during my visit this winter unless you want it to. If, however, there are any aspects of the problem which you want me to look into, any advance word which you can give me would be of assistance in making preparations here.

With best personal regards to you and your wife.

Sincerely,

Charles B. Fahs

Dr. Alfonso Reyes
President
El Colegio de Mexico
Durango, 93
Mexico 7, D.F.
Mexico

CBF:dc

Muchas me complacen las noticias de su próximo viaje, en compañía del Dr. J. P. Harrison. Muchas agradeceré su vivo interés por el Colegio de México, y me será muy grato someterle algunas sugerencias para la posible ayuda a nuestra institución por parte de The Rock. Found., a quien tanto debemos ya.

*With best personal regards to you and your wife,
Sincerely,
a.*

México, D. F., October 9, 1956.

Dr. Charles B. Fahs, Director,
Division of Humanities,
The Rockefeller Foundation,
49 West 49th Street,
New York 20, N. Y.
U. S. A.

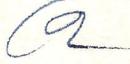
Dear Dr. Fahs:

I am happy to hear that you are coming down to Mexico once more, accompanied by Dr. John P. Harrison, concerned particularly with Latin America.

I want to thank you for your unfailing interest in El Colegio, and I shall be delighted to submit to you some plans of cooperation between our two institutions when you are here in Mexico.

With best personal regards to you and your wife,

Sincerely yours,


Alfonso Reyes.

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CABLE ADDRESS:
ROCKFOUND, NEW YORK
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November 21, 1956

Dear Don Alfonso:

According to present definite plans, I shall be in Mexico again from December 8th to 18th, and shall be staying at the Hotel Reforma. As I believe I wrote you, I shall be accompanied this time by Dr. John P. Harrison, who has recently joined our staff in Humanities and will be particularly concerned with Latin America. Needless to say, I should like to call to pay my personal respects and also to talk about such matters as you may wish to bring up.

Would it be possible for you to get in touch with Dr. Dorothy Parker (telephone number, Mexico City 11-71-51) to indicate when it might be convenient for you to have us call? As in previous years, I am asking her to help to coordinate my Mexican schedule.

35-05-32

*Invites 11 de Dic.
a las 11 a.m.*

Miss Flora M. Rhind, who as Secretary of The Rockefeller Foundation has for some years been one of our senior officers, will be making her first visit to Mexico at the same time. She is of course interested in all phases of the Foundation's work. Because of your long and close association with everything humanistic in Mexico, I am particularly interested to have her meet you; and if the time of our appointment can be fitted by Dr. Parker into Miss Rhind's schedule, I should like very much to bring her along.

Looking forward to seeing you in Mexico next month,
I am,

Sincerely yours,

Burton J. J.

Dr. Alfonso Reyes
President
El Colegio de Mexico
Durango, 93
Mexico 7, D.F., MEXICO

Copy: Dr. Dorothy Parker

CBF:lk