

All-India Institute of Hygiene and  
Public Health,  
110 Chittaranjan Avenue,  
Calcutta-12.  
2 March 1955.

Dear Igmacio,

I would be very curious to know what Garcia Rossel had to say about India and my own experience. The two of us plus Dr. Hubner went together to a specially prepared session of the Bengal Tuberculosis Association and Ovidio spoke very wisely. He seems to share my preoccupation with the fact that in India they are already concerned with post-treatment care and with rehabilitation when they are still in the epidemic stage of the disease and they should be engaged in mass treatment and other ways of infectious foci elimination. He and his mother made very acute remarks about the country and the people but our relations were not so intimate because they were trailing along two other people and the group was rather heterogeneous.

Really my mission is over on the 9th of this month, but WHO has asked me to stay over for a few days in order to attend some meetings in which the Calcutta Training Centre Project will be evaluated. As you are aware, I am the leader of the WHO team in which there are an English pediatrician, an American health educator, three nurses from Canada, New Zealand and South Africa and a Burmese administrative officer. For that purpose, I have prepared an overall report that also consolidates the opinions of my colleagues. On the 21st, I will go to Delhi, by special invitation of the Rockefeller Foundation, to take part in a national conference on the teaching of social and preventive medicine. Afterwards, I will be ready to find my way home, because I could not think of any reason good enough to stay here any longer. My son and I may stay over for some days in Europe but very much hope to reach Chile in the course of April. You may not know that Juan Jose came to visit me as soon as he finished with his bachillerato. It is still too soon to evaluate the result of my mission from someone else's viewpoint. It is obvious that I have installed some sort of a very large pipe through which there may be a two-way and very active interchange between this Institute and the WHO Regional Office. It seems obvious to me too that if the former accepts some of my recommendations the Institute may actually get out of the standstill in which it happens to be at present. Its potentialities as a regional training centre are quite good but its present role is rather weak. Personally, I can hardly describe my satisfaction with enough enthusiasm. For many weeks, I was quite unhappy, but this fact weighs very lightly on my mind and seems to me to be part of the general picture. The modicus of adjustment that I have reached came after a long and painful process. Since I can remember, I have always thought that the most tragic event of the modern era is the divorce of East and West and that conviction has reached obsessive proportions. Now I know that there are two worlds and that the understanding of this one helps you to face your

own problems. These will be subjects of long conversations.

I heartily agree with you on your appreciation of the SNS. As I said to a mutual friend not long ago, the authorities remind me of the father of a mongolian. You show to him that the baby's tongue is too big and the small finger too small and that the muscles are entirely too flabby and the eyes too oblique, but he will still keep saying that the creature is normal. Our half-baked SNS could and can still be a success if the policy is well defined and systematically followed. You and I knew that it was not mature to be born and that it had to be raised as a premature. Unfortunately, the obstetricians and the pediatricians in charge are not objective nor well-oriented. Sometimes, I almost feel that it may be better to see it go very far down such a way that there will be a real chance to see it redressed.

By all means, I will be acutely interested in the developments of your Institute of Preventive and Social Medicine and I wished if no lasting decision were taken on this matter till I come back. My ideas have distilled quite a bit and I may be in a position to help. One of the really successful medicos in town is Dr. H. F. Hahndel whose sister, I understand, works for you and is married in your city. We have had many dealings.

These lines are mainly to thank you kindly for your letter but if you still feel like writing once more, I would be more deeply obliged. In such a case, use the following address: WHO Regional Office, Patiala House, Princes' Park, New Delhi, India.

*Carinus a los tiempos. Siempre siempre.*

*H. R. Roument*