

September 15, 1949

Dr. Frederick L. Stone
Division of Research Grants and Fellowships
National Institute of Health
Bethesda 14, Maryland

Dear Dr. Stone:

I am writing on behalf of Dr. Byron Wenger who is an applicant for a Postdoctorate Research Fellowship from the Public Health Service.

(1) I have known Dr. Wenger since 1941, and I have directed his research towards the Ph. D. in the field of neuro-embryology. I rate him very highly as far as research ability and critical judgment are concerned. He had to cope with a difficult research problem and has shown the ability to work independently and to carry the project to its conclusion. He has shown excellent judgment and a sound critical attitude in the evaluation of his results. He is genuinely interested in research, and I have no doubt that he will continue his research plans with perseverance and energy. He has a good sense of discrimination between essential problems and unessential details, and I trust that he will make valuable contributions in the field of embryology.

(2) Dr. Wenger has an independent and critical mind which does not accept current ideas on its face value. He is capable of thinking problems through and to devise crucial experiments. During his research work, he has shown particular ingenuity in improving some of the standard techniques of micro-manipulation of the chick embryo.

Dr. Wenger has a thorough training in, and understanding of, the fields of experimental and physiological embryology. In addition, he has been keenly interested in biological areas far beyond his field of specialization.

The special purpose of the Research Fellowship, in his case, would be to give him an additional thorough training in the field of biochemistry, and particularly in micro-chemical methods, which could then be applied to embryology. It is generally recognized that progress in physiological embryology can be made only through the application of biochemical and biophysical methods. Hence, it is of great importance that persons be trained thoroughly in both embryology and biochemistry. Dr. Wenger has a sufficient background in biochemistry, but he needs a better working knowledge of the techniques in this field. The interest of Dr. Lowry in the biochemistry of the nervous system would make the association of Dr. Wenger with his laboratory particularly profitable since Dr. Wenger would wish to apply biochemical methods to the embryonic nervous system.

(4) Dr. Wenger has a well-balanced personality. He is entirely honest with himself and with others. He has the ability to concentrate on his work, and the patience and perseverance which are necessary in research. Occasional setbacks in his work have not upset him or discouraged him.

Dr. Stone

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(6) Dr. Wenger's character is beyond any reproach, and conversations with him have convinced me of his loyalty to the United States Government and to the ideas for which it stands.

I recommend Dr. Wenger without qualification for a Postdoctorate Research Fellowship of the National Institute of Health.

Very sincerely yours,

Viktor Hamburger
Professor of Zoology
Head of Department

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