



Just to give you an idea as to what happened at the luncheon

Negro Physicians (Correspondence - Peterson, Jerome)

CITY OF NEW YORK

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH
CENTRAL HARLEM HEALTH DISTRICT
BOROUGH OF MANHATTAN



TEL. TILLINGHAST 5-2260

CENTER
2238 FIFTH AVENUE

Lower Harlem Chest Clinic
111 West 116 Street
New York, N. Y.

MO. 2 - 1533 - 1534

August 17, 1939

Dr. M. O. Bousfield
Director of Negro Health
Julius Rosenwald Fund
4901 Ellis Avenue
Chicago, Illinois

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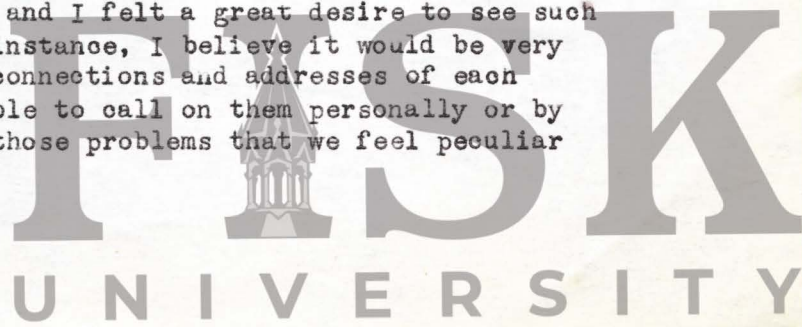
Dear Dr. Bousfield:

I am sorry I had to leave the discussion at the Hotel Astor, August 16th, but I was already very late for my work at the clinic. May I thank you again for your kindness in having invited me to so pleasant and interesting a meeting.

I was very much stimulated by your opening remarks and the problems you posed that confront us - Negro Workers in Public Health. Two very obvious facts seem of great importance to us. The first is that there is such an entity as Negro public health, whether we wish it or not. Vital statistics are compiled in most parts of this country on a racial basis and problems are posed specifically for Negroes. The second fact is the difficulty we Negroes, interested and trained in public health, have in securing our proper place in public health programs. The tide has begun toward the proposition that Negro workers in public health can do a better job among Negroes than White workers. As you candidly pointed out there is the necessity to prove this and to extend Negro participation in public health programs.

It thus appears to me that our group of twenty odd people at the luncheon had these things in common: an interest in public health, training in public health, being confronted by the problems of Negro public health and the fact of being Negroes and the difficulties experienced from that.

Yesterday's meeting left me with a feeling of regret that this was apparently an episode and I felt a great desire to see such an experience prolonged. For instance, I believe it would be very worthwhile to have the names, connections and addresses of each person at the luncheon to be able to call on them personally or by mail, to consult with them on those problems that we feel peculiar to our work.



While I object very strongly to hastily formed and poorly advised organizations, I wonder whether it would not be possible to have some sort of loose connection among the members of this group to at least find out whether or not eventually an organization of some sort would be desirable. The sending out of monthly or bi-monthly mimeographed bulletins would help to acquaint each with the work of the other. It would seem logical that the Rosenwald Fund which has sponsored so much in the way of Negro public health would be the sponsoring organization in this. Of course no organization of this type could take the place of our large national organizations such as the American Public Health Association and the American Medical Association to which all people interested in public health should belong. However, I believe the problems we meet are sufficiently profound and sufficiently peculiar that some sort of organization eventually would be warranted to assist workers in dealing with those problems.

I am very sorry not to find the opportunity to talk to you personally before I leave for Puerto Rico, but I should like very much to keep in touch with you while I am down there. My immediate address there will be:

C/O Insular Sanitarium
Rio Piedras, Puerto Rico.

Sincerely yours,


JEROME S. PETERSON, M.D.

JSP:fs


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