

May 4, 1959

Dr. David H. Timothy
The Rockefeller Foundation
Bogota, Colombia

Dear Dave:

Your letter of April 28 came in the mail this morning. I was pleased to learn that Rocio still shows some interest in coming to the U.S. My suggestion that she be broken-in in Mexico was related to the prospect of my being there. I expect to be in Chapingo beginning this June and if all goes well, I may spend much of the rest of the year there. Rocio could be working with me in Chapingo and she could also take some courses at the Ag. school in botany, genetics or whatever would be beneficial for building up her background. There would be no language barrier in the initial period of gaining information of the subject of genetics. I would expect that she would also be learning something from me that could be of help in this orientation period. She could subsequently come to the U.S. with me when I return. She would then start here with her objectives more clearly defined.

Now about the mother. I know the whole story well! In fact, I had a long talk with Rocio's mother about this topic. At that time, she seemed to respond to the arguments that I used in favor of having Rocio go to the U.S., and alone. However, she is a very selfish woman. Rocio understands much of the basic cause of the difficulty but she is worn out by the conflicts it has induced. As I see it, it would be well to emphasize that Rocio would be with me and that I could also arrange to have her live where I do. This would remove one of the main excuses her mother has been using -- expressed fear of proper supervision of Rocio by an older woman. Rocio must realize that she has only two alternatives: to remain with her mother in Medellin or to break from her right away and regardless of how much her mother might scream about it. If she remains with her mother, the consequent frustrations she will experience will be drastic. If she decides to come with me, she should be gotten out of Medellin without delay. Under no circumstances should her mother be allowed to go with her. She could be promised a visit later, if that would help in the period before getting Rocio out of the country. Incidentally, the mother told me that she would be equally upset if Rocio got married and left her. So, as you said, she is a knucklehead and deserves a kick where it hurts. Rocio has just matured enough to understand what it is all about and it has been a shocking realization for her. Her difficulties are really quite great and I dread to think of what will happen if she does not take a quick and affirmative stand.

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About my coming to Colombia later in the year: I am not sure how things will go in Mexico. Certainly, I should not attempt to work at the speed and concentration applied in Medellin. It would be too much, particularly since I have been pushing hard on my own work in the last three months. However, I will drop my own work for a while and concentrate on the race studies. Certainly, there should be time for me to return to Colombia again. I am not going to push any date lines. Are you planning on taking sporocytes from the Colombia races? Or, would you want me to work on some of the other races of Ecuador and Bolivia whose sporocytes are now in the deep freeze? Possibly, you might want some of both.

Thank you for your good letter. I can only hope that all goes well with Rocio.

Sincerely,

Barbara McClintock

P.S. - What I am trying to say about Rocio is that it is she, not the mother, who must make the decision.