

INTER-OFFICE CORRESPONDENCE

900  
Villa Serbelloni

FROM: HR

DATE: January 28, 1965

TO:

BRC	APR 30 1965	

COMMENTS:

*Seem fine*

APR 20 1965

SUBJECT:

While John Marshall was here, we discussed a basic release on the Villa Serbelloni for the Italian press only. JM had with him a list of questions that had been asked of him, and the attached draft, which has been approved by him, meets all the questions he wants to answer.

I would appreciate your reviewing and checking this. If you approve, we will append the roster of meetings and scholars in residence, duplicate the material, and send it to JM.

*[Signature]*

Draft #2Purpose

The Villa Serbelloni is owned and maintained by The Rockefeller Foundation of New York, chartered in 1913, with the broad purpose of promoting "the well-being of mankind throughout the world." The Villa came to the Foundation by legacy on the death of its late owner, Ella Walker, the Princess Della Torre e Tasso, on June 20, 1959. The Foundation immediately began considering how it might best make use of the Villa, and toward the end sought the advice of an international group of scholars and scientists who came to the Villa to gain an acquaintance with its possibilities during September and October, 1959. Shortly thereafter it was agreed that the Villa would be used in two principal ways, first as a place where scholars and scientists might reside while studying and writing, and second as a center where leaders in the academic, professional, and governmental fields might meet for group discussions in complete quiet and detachment. The first such conference, held in October, 1959, brought together educators from several countries interested in associating refugee Tibetan scholars with European and American universities so as to advance knowledge of this relatively unexplored culture. During the past six years, the Villa Serbelloni has accommodated \_\_\_ professional conferences and afforded study opportunities to \_\_\_ individuals (see attached roster). The international character of these meetings has developed steadily; during 1964, fifty-four nationalities were represented at the Villa conferences.

Operation

An officer of The Rockefeller Foundation is in residence at the Villa as director of its activities, buildings, and grounds. The Villa's

program, however, is determined by a committee in the Foundation's New York headquarters. In some instances, the Foundation itself takes the initiative of organizing conferences, as for example the meetings on "Research in Agriculture and Medicine in Africa" and "The Future of the Arab Theatre." In other cases, groups interested in meeting at the Villa Serbelloni make their request to the Foundation in New York, where it is considered by a special committee. The yardsticks used by the committee are, in the main, whether a given conference is likely to contribute to the advancement of knowledge and its effective application to human interests and needs. Invitations to individual scholars and scientists for residential study at the Villa usually initiate with the Foundation. All persons participating in conferences, or in residence at the Villa are guests of the Foundation during their stay.

The park of the Villa Serbelloni is open to the public; twice daily from the Monday before Easter to October 1st. During 1964, some 5,000 visitors toured its park with the Villa's guide. Admission charges collected are donated to local charities.

#### Proceedings

The conferences which take place at the Villa rarely exceed 20 15(?) participants so as to take full advantage of the Villa's unique possibilities for free and informal exchange of ideas between men who, although frequently known to each other by reputation, seldom have the opportunity for face-to-face discussion. Some of the conferences are intended primarily as an exchange of views among the participants; <sup>others</sup> more result in reports which are presented to some international organization. In general it may be said that results of meetings at the Villa are made public in one way or another.