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Dear Karel,

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I was surprised not to see you at the meetings in New York fortnight ago. I thought that you were fond of these shindigs. However, considering the pace at which you are apparently going, it would be silly to attend meetings except for possible political purposes, in which event the College of Surgeons ^{Jamborees} supposedly have more to offer. At any rate, you didn't miss very much in the way of startling discoveries, or the like.

Several of the Minneapolis contingent were present, but I didn't have a chance to say hello to any other than Aldo Castaneda. Rich Hillehei arrived in very much of a Bohemian attire. I often wonder why it is that naturally bright individuals should seek the dubious gloss of eccentricity to make themselves more noticeable. Henry Swan used to be that way, you know, traveling in cowboy boots and a blond on each arm.

The little news I have from your old homestead reports that OHW was not exactly pleased with the choice of his successor. Neither, of course, were those at the institution (such as your old pal Varco) who took it for granted that they were favorite sons. After the announcement had dissipated all rumors, it seems that some fierce jockeying supervened. There are several individuals who are now going around making sure that they are being heard praising "dear John" as a hell of a fine guy. Others, such as Gene Bernstein, are apparently just waiting for the right opportunity to cop out. Walt Hillehei is, of course,

unassailable. So much so, in fact, that I was startled to see this widely-respected leader of cardiac surgery pose in the February 17th issue of TIME Magazine for an ad for Northwestern Mutual Life Insurance Company! OHW is not in very good shape in the reshuffling. He finally was allowed an office in some part of the building, but with a drastically curtailed secretarial staff & lab facilities. It is sad to see someone like that not know when to pull out gracefully so as to spare himself the inevitable knocks.

Matters have brightened a bit at this end. I spent most of my time at Charles Bailey's place (St. Barnabas Hosp. in the Bronx), where I am active on the clinical service and do some research. Funds remain a problem, as you can imagine, but I prefer to think of this phase as an interlude. I saw Jude at the meetings, and matters from that quarter are still pending. An old prof and friend of mine, John Templeton has recently been named to succeed Gibbon at Jefferson. There's a possibility, therefore, in that direction also, but it will have to wait until Temp starts in July and finds out what sort of a department (mediocre) he's inherited.

I've been reviewing articles on cardiac trauma. Would you please be a good sort and give me a hand with the enclosed Creech blurb. It apparently concerns some psychopath who was operated for a needle in the heart 12 years after injury. Specifically I'm interested in the following: age and sex; mode of injury (? suicide, ? accident? swallowed? pushed in chest?); symptoms and signs; management (any unusual ECG signs); operative findings (where in the heart was the needle?); postop course (pericarditis?) Thanks loads. Would you please return the blurb & the above notations? When are you coming this-a-way? How are things at your end? Warmest regards, David.