

January 9, 1968

Harold A. Zintel, M.D.
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Dear Dr. Zintel

I hope that you don't mind that Dr. Wangenstein sent me copies of your correspondence with him. Enclosed are some of my more recent reprints. I am interested indeed in getting a clinical and research opportunity with responsibility, and emphasis on the latter. A situation in which I could develop a transplantation program and artificial organ program, would be of interest to me; I would welcome some other clinical responsibility, if it could be fitted in your program. Specifically - I am interested in "surgical problem diseases," which require laboratory solution. Transplantation of the liver in children with biliary atresia that I was the first to apply in the heterotopic position, is one such example.

I am quite versed in abdominal, vascular, thoracic and cardiac surgery. I have set up a successful open heart program over here and my present income is approximately \$65,000 a year. I am however, not able to fulfill some of my other ambitions, namely to make a greater impact in scientific surgery. I also do not have opportunity to teach students and residents, as we have none. It will take some 5-10 years to develop a good teaching - research program over here. I did get unusually good experience clinically, including operative procedures such as coronary endarterectomies, that I introduced experimentally some years ago.

My major scientific effort over here was to write a small monograph on Billroth's first six gastrectomies, ready for publication, and major effort, a biography of Billroth which I am in the process of writing.

If you should wish to, I would be privileged if you should want me to present in one of your seminars a talk on clinical myocardial revascularization, including coronary endarterectomy, with demonstration of coronary angiograms, etc. and followup, which I shall present in May to the Texas Medical Association.

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I don't blame you for suspecting my motives for having left Minnesota; actually I was because of that somewhat suspect at first in Amarillo. Now my friends who want me to stay here tooth and nail, laugh about it. The reasons were several; one was to try to establish and get a taste of private practice, it was a challenge I did not experience before. I wanted to operate more and to find out how good a surgeon I actually was with a large volume of independent surgery. I know that in the research and academic surgical area I could stand on my own. The challenge of bringing into the hinterland sophisticated modern surgery such as open heart surgery was exciting to me. The volume of patients needing help was most attractive. This I have accomplished.

In addition I was able to pursue one of my hobbies and get a good historical library assembled with purchases from all over the world, and I now could afford it. To have my own Vesalius, Sylvius, Morgagni, Scarpa, Beaumont, is so much fun. In other words I rounded myself up as surgeon with a better knowledge of people, history, theory, practice of surgery and related subjects such as physiology, biochemistry, immunology. I followed diligently scientific progress as available to me. There is joy from encompassing the field. Now I want to narrow down and make a more lasting contribution.

In the past two years and presently I got several exciting academic offers, the advantages of which I am weighing. Now the time is for me, so it appears, ripe to move; the philosophy of surgery changed enough to go on and expand on my modest past contributions in the area of transplantation and cardiac surgery. I have the equipment.

Sincerely

Karel B. Absolon, M.D.

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