



CENTRO INTERNACIONAL DE MEJORAMIENTO DE MAIZ Y TRIGO

INTERNATIONAL MAIZE AND WHEAT IMPROVEMENT CENTER

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Cable: CENCIMMYT

August 2, 1971

Dr. M. S. Swaminathan
Director, Indian Agricultural Research Institute
New Delhi 11,
INDIA.

Dear Dr. Swaminathan:

George Varughese brought me, a few minutes ago, a Xerox copy of an article published in the Times of India on July 19, and your reply to the Editor on July 20th.

Needless to say, I am saddened by the tactics of a few ruthless people- and worse yet when some of them are obviously scientists. Such tactics of attacking both you, personally, as well as I.A.R.I., as an organization, is very damaging. Unfortunately the average layman has no way of evaluating the validity of falseness of such charges.

I must now tell you that the last day that I was in India in March of 1971, a bellboy at the Hotel Ashoka gave me an unsigned letter. This letter, addressed to me, was a diatribe against you and I.A.R.I. I recognized it as the complaint of a malcontent, or mischievous person, and tore the letter up and forgot about it.

I believe your letter to the Editor of the Times of India should have clarified all of the points that were raised. I liked very much the tone, orientation and coverage of your letter, and think that it will clarify the points that were raised.

I resent the way that my name, and that of my organization CIMMYT, was used in the Times of India article to discredit you and I.A.R.I. As you well know, whoever gave the information to the Staff Reporter who wrote The Times of India article, gave him half truths and words lifted from context, which is very inaccurate, cruel and unfair. Whoever

has done this does not have I.A.R.I.'s, or the Government of India's or the people of India's interest at heart. It is obviously organized by someone who has little regard for the future role of agricultural science to the improvement of the standard of living of the people of India.

It seems ironical that such criticism should come now, after the tremendous achievements that have been made in increasing wheat production, and the very great role that you, personally, and I.A.R.I. in collaboration with other institutions has played in revolutionizing wheat production.

George has told me that the estimates place the 1971 crop at more than 24 million tons. Fantastic! Keep up the good work and I hope soon the same results will be forthcoming with rice, sorghum, and millet.

I urge you to close your ears and eyes to such unjust criticism. Ignore it. I know from personal experience, that it is not pleasant, but you will recall I have said that when one deals with provoking change one must develop deafness and grow a hide as thick as that of a rhinoceros so that we will not be hurt by criticism. Status quo is always comfortable to small minds, and change is disconcerting. For such mentalities change gives them the opportunity to criticize-and as we have seen in this case in The Times of India it is unjust, ruthless and harmful.

Dr. Swaminathan, I want you to know that we in CIMMYT, have always had, and will continue to have, tremendous faith in you as a scientist, scholar, educator and humanist.

Best personal regards.

Sincerely,

Norman E. Borlaug

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P. S. Since finishing this letter, yours of July 19th has come to my attention. I am pleased you had a good and profitable trip to Poland. The results you report are encouraging. I am sorry you won't be able to come to our CIMMYT inauguration. We need you, and hope you will reconsider. On the other hand, if it is impossible for you to come, we of course will be pleased to have Dr. S. A. Kholi represent India.

c.c. Dr. George Varughese