

407 Commercial Center Street  
Beverly Hills California

April 17 1950

Dr. Edward Bibring,  
Chairman, Committee on Institutes,  
The American Psychoanalytic Association,  
82 Marlborough Street,  
Boston 16, Mass.

Dear Dr. Bibring:

Dr. Robert P. Knight, Chairman of the Board on Professional Standards, has written me that he has forwarded to you the application for recognition of another psychoanalytic institute in Los Angeles submitted by Drs. Miller, Grotjahn and Romm. You have also received a statement dated April 6th, 1950 and signed by all training analysts of the Los Angeles Institute for Psychoanalysis requesting that the application for recognition of another psychoanalytic institute in Los Angeles be acted upon promptly.

I wish to state for those training analysts who will remain with the present Los Angeles Institute for Psychoanalysis, namely, Mrs. Frances Beri, Drs. David Brunswick, Ralph Greenson, Charles W. Tidd, Carel Van der Heide and myself that neither the above mentioned statement of April 6th nor the one which accompanied the application can be construed as an endorsement or sponsorship of the new institute on our part.

I should like to give you a brief summary of the events that have led to the present situation in Los Angeles.

Practically from the very beginning of this institute and society there has been some discord among training analysts and other members of the society. In principle the causes are the same that exist in most or all other psychoanalytic groups and are well known to you. The main issues involved are always basically a lack of thorough understanding of psychoanalysis, its theories and technical necessities, which results in ill-conceived attempts at so-called progress, and premature abandoning of well established parts of psychoanalytical theory and technique. Most of us older analysts have seen such things happen again and again, and are aware of the fact that they are due either to resistances never analyzed or to a "return of the repression" and that such progress proceeds in a backward direction. Differences of an emotional nature are usually present, but of minor importance.

The difficulties here were already in existence when Ernst Simmel and Otto Fenichel were still alive, but have become increasingly more glaring since then.

My friends and I became more and more concerned about the problem of how to discharge our obligation to teach good psychoanalysis

and how to train competent analysts, as the discord interfered more and more with the operation of the training school and maintenance of high standards. We realized that a way would have to be found to eliminate the friction and secure adequate teaching and training.

In accord with my friends I proposed on February 2nd, 1950 a reorganization of the Education Committee and training school along lines similar to the solution found a few years ago in the London Psychoanalytic Institute. This compromise solution which recognizes two groups with the right to organize independent teaching and training programs within one institute appeared to us the only one that would have protected the students' interests and rights in the best possible way. This proposal was flatly rejected. The opposing group consisting of Drs. Grotjahn, Miller and Romm insisted that the only solution that would satisfy them would be a complete split-up and the foundation of another institute. After a lengthy discussion we agreed to this.

In order to facilitate the establishment of the new institute and to protect the interests of the students it was agreed that the seceding members would de jure if not de facto remain with the present institute till the new institute was recognized and established. Also for the purpose of facilitating the foundation of another institute we agreed to appoint Dr. Norman Levy training analyst with the understanding that he would function in the new institute.

I personally am not happy about the present situation, but realize that there is definitely no other way out than a complete split-up, if a clear line is to be drawn between what we consider good analysis and other forms of psychotherapy that insist on sailing under the flag of psychoanalysis.

I am enclosing a copy of a statement submitted by our group to our students' organization which endeavors to explain to them the stand taken by us.

Sincerely yours,

Ernst Levy, M. D.

EL/r1  
Enclosure