

Washington- Dietary Guidelines

The major stimulus for the formation of the Senate Select Committee on Nutrition and Human Needs, chaired by George McGovern, was the trip Robert Kennedy made through some parts of the south and/or Appalachia. He reported that he was appalled at the poverty and hunger he saw, especially in children. About the same time the Field Foundation sponsored a national television program based upon a survey they had conducted which also demonstrated hunger in many groups. Also the White House Conference on Food, Nutrition and Health, chaired by Jean Mayer, occurred during the Nixon years (1969). The trouble with the White House Conference was that there were so many recommendations - practically anything and everything that might be useful and some that were not - that not many people paid attention to any.

McGovern said (I think) in his autobiography that he hoped Kennedy would make him Secretary of Agriculture. That didn't happen but he became the head of the Senate Select Committee on Nutrition and Human Needs.

The membership of the Committee varied somewhat over the years but was an impressive group. In addition to McGovern it included Kennedy of Mass, Dole of Kansas, Humphrey of Minn, Taft of Ohio, Mondale of Minn, - all presidential candidates - Percy of Ill, Hatfield of OR, and others. It is clear from the membership that the topic was considered to be important and to have political payoffs.

The Committee held many Hearings over several years and practically everyone in academia, industry, government or the public who had or wanted to make a contribution had an opportunity to testify. Select committees do not write legislation but there was a great expansion of the food programs - school lunch, food stamps, WIC, etc. It seems to me that by about 1974 or 5 it was becoming clear that the committee had about run out of steam. These welfare programs were now large, it not likely that they could be further expanded or new ones created. Large programs invite criticism about cost and efficacy.

Committees have a staff, of course, and they tend to become self-sustaining and looking for business. The committee staff had become rather well acquainted with a lot of people in the nutrition field. One of my former students, Chris Hitt, had joined the staff. This may have had some influence on their activities since my course in Public Health Nutrition emphasized what I considered to be the major health problems of the US population - the chronic diseases. I had no specific information on the activities of the staff or committee but one learns that much, if not most, of what happens in such committees is determined by the staff. They have to know or guess what the

chairman and others are likely to support and arrange the program appropriately. So Hearings on what they called The Killer Diseases were held July 27 & 28, 1976. All of the witnesses to varying degrees (I believe) supported the idea that diet was related to the major chronic diseases. I testified that Americans should - eat less food; less meat; less fat, particularly saturated fat; less cholesterol; less sugar; more unsaturated fat, fruits, vegetables and cereal products. The Dietary Goals which eventually emerged from the Committee almost duplicated these recommendations.

During the following months the staff, primarily Nick Mottern, produced a draft of the Dietary Goals for Americans. I'm not sure of the details but if I recall correctly I was given the draft around June of 1977. About the same time it was announced that the McGovern Committee would be disbanded. Periodically the Senate and House have to clean the slate since special committees tend to accumulate. Several of us wrote letter objecting but to no avail. My first inclination was to send the draft to the Food and Nutrition Board, the traditional source of nutrition advice to the government and public. In retrospect, it was lucky that that did not happen. But it was clear that if the report was to see the light of day it would have to be published before the McGovern Committee disappeared and the Food and Nutrition Board could not act soon enough so that was not an option. I did not think it was a very strong report but I did strongly supported the Dietary Goals. In view of the time restraints I contented myself with removing or changing material that I thought was either wrong or unsupportable. I gather that Shelly Margen (Berkeley), Phil Lee (U of Calif, (San Francisco) and Beverly Winikoff (Rockefeller Foundation) were the others who reviewed the manuscript.

Unfortunately I do not have a copy of the first edition of the Dietary Goals and I'm unsure of the sequence of events but there was a storm of protest when the Dietary Goals for Americans was published. In view of subsequent events it is important to note that Phil Handler, the President of the National Academy of Sciences, told me personally that he was sure that the Food and Nutrition Board "would never support that kind of nonsense" and in a rather short period of time the composition of the FNB changed so that it was certain that he was right. Although Phil had had little to do with nutrition for many years, he always assumed that he was an expert in the field and there is no doubt that he exerted a strong influence on the Board over the next few years.

The Meat, Milk and Egg producers were very upset. They had been producing "protective foods" - foods that were practically required for a balanced diet - and were now being told that consumption of such products should be reduced. My impression is that most of the nutrition community was opposed to the Goals. I

think that they felt that a senate committee had no business getting involved in recommendations that ought to be made by the scientific community. The scientific community as far as nutrition was concerned was the Food and Nutrition Board. There was no other established source for such information and here were a set of Goals that made essentially no mention of the essential nutrients or the Recommended Dietary Allowances, These had been the basis of national nutrition policy since their inception in 1942.

Supplemental Views were published in November. In the Foreword McGovern notes that the Dietary Goals "generated a great deal of interest, debate and controversy" and that additional hearings requested by the Meat and Egg producers were held. I do not have a copy of these but my one recollection is that late in the afternoon Bob Dole was the only committee member remaining and the beef people were complaining vigorously. Finally, Dole was obviously tired of the endless complaints and he said something like " I have done this, and this, and this for you people. But if you are going to oppose things like this, I don't know if I want to represent you!!" I'd be interested to know if this exchange occurs in the written record. McGovern had requested opinions from about 50 experts, 24 of whom were recommended by the Livestock and Meat Board. A lot of the comments were negative, of course, but it was nice that the Supplemental Views began with a strong editorial from Lancet supporting the Goals.

The Second Edition of the Dietary Goals for Americans appeared in December of 1977. The only major change was that the recommendation to eat less meat was removed. I thought and still think that that was a correct recommendation and will eventually be part of general dietary guidance but I knew there was very little direct evidence to support it. So I did not object. It turned out, Nick Mottern was a real vegetarian who had some objectives other than the improvement of the national diet but his arguments did not prevail. Senator Dole was pleased that the advice to eat less meat had been removed.

McGovern was also chairman of the Agriculture Committee of the Senate. The Farm Bill specifying the activities of the USDA is passed every 5 years I believe. McGovern and perhaps others (his staff I'm sure) were provoked when the Head of NIH or was it the Heart Institute, Don Fredrickson, testified that he did not believe that the NIH should take a position on the Dietary Goals. He argued that the NIH was a research institution and their objectiveness might be compromised if they pushed specific recommendations or positions like these. This may not have been the major point but the Farm Bill pushed nutrition in the USDA versus the NIH and HHS. I expect that McGovern and others also thought that since these large food programs were centered in the USDA, the USDA should have a stronger voice in nutrition research and policy. In any event the Farm Bill specified that Nutrition

should have an identifiable position in the USDA and that the USDA should hold the primary nutrition research role except for clinical nutrition. The first forced the USDA to create the post of Administrator of Nutrition that I eventually accepted. This elevated Nutrition to the same level as the Agriculture Research Service in the Science and Education Administration at the USDA. Previously the Agricultural Research Service had administered the nutrition activities which were not very extensive.

The second directive did not make much sense considering the amounts of money available at the USDA and the NIH. There was really no way that the USDA could compete with the NIH but the wording did make it clear that nutritional considerations within the government must involve the USDA. One can understand that the USDA was not very happy with this turn of events since the Dietary goals were opposed by the meat, milk and egg producers.

I don't recall the wording in the Farm Bill but it was clear that the USDA would fund nutrition research laboratories in the East, West and South to balance the laboratory in Grand Forks, North Dakota. I was at least mildly opposed to this effort because I thought that twice as many institutions of half the size would be a better investment, especially in training. However, when it became clear that it was going to happen I saw no utility in pushing an opposing position. Jean Mayer's political connections made it quite clear early on that the laboratory would be at Tufts in Boston. These labs were sold as Regional Laboratories but we all knew that that was political rhetoric to make the idea more palatable to the local politicians

Chris Hitt asked me if I would be interested in applying for the job at the USDA. I was nearing retirement so this sounded more interesting than anything else on the horizon. I sent in my application. A few weeks later Chris called and asked why I hadn't applied. Apparently the USDA had mislaid my application. I always wondered whether this was deliberate. In any event, I was invited to Washington, met a few people like Anson Bertrand who would be my boss, Carol Foreman, the Ass't Secretary who was a vigorous consumer advocate, the Secretary, Bob Bergland, and others, of course. I accepted the job. Jack Iacono became my deputy. Jack had been the primary representative of nutrition within the USDA, I needed someone familiar with the Department and Washington and I enjoyed and appreciated his support and contributions.

Within the first week or so that I was there, there was a large meeting at the NIH attended by practically everyone in the Governmental agencies that had anything to do with food and nutrition. The question was how should the government respond to the Dietary Goals. I don't know who had set this up.

The major representation from the NIH wanted to send the whole

problem to the Food and Nutrition Board, as the governmental agencies usually did. Jack and I and perhaps a few others knew very well what that would mean since Phil Handler and several members of the Board were already on record as opposed. We argued that we in the government had plenty of expertise to make the decision and, furthermore, the FNB often made recommendations that were not very practical. They had no responsibility for enforcement of the recommendations and might not consider practical limitations to their recommendations. I could recall the RDA for vitamin B6 and Mg which were included in the RDA when I was Chairman of the FNB. The nutritionists at the USDA had called me and said it was impossible to prepare diets which would meet the recommendations. I had no solution other than to say the RDA were only recommendations. The fact is, of course, that the RDA have been written into various kinds of legislation some of which makes no sense.

We finally agreed that a small committee of six members would prepare a report. If I remember correctly, the make-up of that committee. It included Jack and me from the USDA and Al Forbes and Sandy Miller of the FDA and a young lady from Michigan who happened to be at the NIH. It was soon apparent that we weren't going to get anywhere. Al and the others from NIH argued that we needed to make a full examination of all the evidence. We argued that that had already been done several times and that all we needed to do was state our conclusions. I think the problem was that Jack and I were completely aware of what had and was going on in the field over the years while Al and Sandy had not been involved and were much less familiar with the evidence. In any event, no-one on the committee was prepared to prepare such a review which was obviously a big job. Several meetings produced no movement.

We were aware that the American Society of Clinical Nutrition had, in fact, appointed a committee to review the evidence relating diet to the chronic diseases. We finally voted to accept the conclusions of that committee. This was taking a big chance for those of us who knew in which direction we wanted the report to go since Pete Ahrens of the Rockefeller Hospital was chairman of the ASCN committee and was known to oppose general dietary recommendations for control of coronary disease. Like many physicians Pete thought that those at risk should be identified by their physicians before being advised about diet. There were, however, some rather strong advocates of the Goals on the committee as well.

The Committee reported in May of 1979 (AJCN 1979;32:2626). They considered several topics - dietary cholesterol & atherosclerosis; saturated and unsaturated fat & atherosclerosis; carbohydrate, sucrose & dental caries; alcohol & liver disease & atherosclerosis; excess calories & obesity, hypertension, diabetes * atherosclerosis; sodium and hypertension. There was so

much disagreement within the committee that they established a scoring system based upon a) associations among population groups; b) associations among individuals; c) intervention studies; d) animal model studies; e) biological explanations. They used a scoring system: 0 to 20. 0 would be Rock solid evidence. Although there were only 7 scores Ahren's calculated the mean score and the standard deviation which were reported as follows:

Issue	Mean score	SD
Cholesterol	62	20
Saturated fat	58	15
Cholesterol and fat	73	15
Carbohydrate & athero	11	8
Carbohydrate and diabetes	13	17
Carbohydrate & dental caries	87	6
Alcohol and liver disease	88	8
Alcohol and atherosclerosis	13	15
Salt	74	9
Excess calories	68	18

When you consider that the values fall within plus or minus 2 SD from the mean, the extent of disagreement is clear. One person, for example, considered the evidence on excess calories as very poor with a score near 25. Similarly for cholesterol one score might have been as low as 12. The data were probably skewed since it is unlikely that any values received a score of 100. Additional information was provided in the report, of course, within the report. In any event, we considered the report to provide reasonable support for an important role for cholesterol, saturated fat, salt, excess calories and sugar and dental caries since the mean was above 50.

We hired a science writer to prepare a report based upon this report, the individual reports of the committee members, the Dietary Goals, etc. The drafts she prepared went back and forth to various people at HHS, FDA, NIH, my office, Audrey Cross and a few other people at the USDA. I don't suppose that there is any record of the various stages but eventually Mike McGinnis and I decided that this could not go on forever and approved what was then published as the Dietary Guidelines for Americans. If I recall correctly we did have one meeting with the people in both HHS and USDA who were one level up, mainly Carol Foreman, Assistant Secretary for Consumer Affairs in the USDA and Julius Richmond who was Assistant Secretary of Health. The Guidelines were deliberately made about as general and non-quantitative as we could make them. The first edition was a small 20 page pamphlet with the Guidelines on the first page.

Eat a variety of foods
Maintain desirable weight

Avoid too much fat, saturated fat and cholesterol
Eat foods with adequate starch and fiber
Avoid too much sugar
Avoid too much salt
If you drink alcohol, do so in moderation

I do not know anything about what happened at the Secretary level. I suppose that Carol Foreman had a major role within the USDA but Bob Bergland did approve. I doubt that any Secretary of Agriculture before would have approved them. I do recall that at the news conference when the Guidelines were presented that Bergland did ask, a little skeptically, whether they should apply to all people. I remember that Jane Brody of the NY Times was there; the first time I met her and I suspect that it was probably her first introduction to nutrition. She said it was a lousy report that included no science. I said it was backed by science.

The crux of the problem and the source of most of the arguments, of course, were the problems with all public health recommendations. The AMA and people like Pete Ahrens and many others argued that those "at risk", those with higher cholesterol levels, for example, should be identified and provided with dietary guidance and that the dietary guidance might vary with the type of hyperlipidemia. This is probably partially true but general Guidelines are not expected to specific advice from physicians. It is also now evident that many people at very moderate risk would benefit from an appropriate diet. In any event, this is what is called the Preventive Paradox. That is, in any preventive program one does impose restrictions on people who have little or nothing to gain to protect those at risk. Also, for many people following the general dietary advice would lower their serum lipids only moderately, say 5-10%. This modest change has little effect upon their individual risk but a 10% fall in the disease incidence in the total population is a great achievement. In fact, the data available indicated that a 5% fall in the average serum cholesterol level should produce a 10-15% decrease in the incidence of coronary disease.

If the Dietary Goals were bad or obnoxious to many, the Guidelines were much worse. In particular the meat, milk and egg people thought that the USDA had stabbed them in the back. They thought or assumed that the primary obligation of the USDA was to protect and promote agriculture. They ignored the fact that the USDA was responsible for the major food programs and had an obligation to base the feeding programs on the best nutrition evidence. These programs originated, of course, as a means to dispose of excess production during the 1930's but have become important welfare programs and also represent a major function of the USDA

The Food and Nutrition Board of the NAS produced "Toward

Healthful Diets". The major point of this report as compared to the Dietary Guidelines was the familiar one - people should consult and be guided by their physicians and that there was not sufficient evidence to recommend a general reduction in dietary fat and cholesterol. This produced a flood of comment - the government and the Academy were at odds!! I don't have a copy but there was a strong supportive editorial in the NY Times which apparently took the Academy to task and questioned the motives of some members. Alf Harper wrote a letter to the Times objecting (5/5/1980). He says it was a "vehement and emotional reaction" and that he hopes that "future Food and Nutrition Boards will resist efforts to coerce them into conformity and will stand firm against attacks on their integrity". One issue that was raised repeatedly was that Bob Olson was a member of the Egg Board. The members of the Food and Nutrition Board at that time who were clearly opposed to the Guidelines were Alf Harper, Roslyn Alfin-Slater, Bob Olson, Gil Leveille and Irv Rosenberg. All these were on record as opposed or had expressed their opposition to me. I'm not sure of the position of most of the members but I was somewhat surprised by the report. Sol Chafkin of the Rockefeller Foundation had told me prior to its publication that the Board was gradually shifting "toward the Hegsted position". My guess is that many were only moderately interested or involved and not prepared to stand up against the Chairmn. They were probably surprised at the rather vigorous reaction to the report. But, since Phil Handler was opposed to the Guidelines it was practically a foregone conclusion that the Board would be opposed. As I have noted before, I think that some of the members of the Board were specifically chosen because of their opposition to the Dietary Goals.

Two Congressional Hearings that I am aware of were held. The first was Chaired by Frederick Richmond of the Subcommittee on Domestic Marketing, Consumer Relations and Nutrition of the House Committee on Agriculture. The second was Chaired by Thomas Eagleton of the Subcommittee on Agriculture, Rural Development and Related Affairs of the Senate Committee on Appropriations. One can appreciate the influence the attitude of the Chairman has on Hearings. We, the supporters of the Guidelines, got a very fair hearing by Richmond's Committee although there was plenty of opposition. For example, representative Wampler of Virginia said "...the report from the Food and Nutrition Board is welcome ...and long overdue...and...I hope we have not reached the point in time when we attempt to silence scientific dissent....I think it is unfortunate that editorial writers, political cartoonists and others have attempted to question the integrity of the two mentioned persons (Bob Olson and Alf Harper)". Grassley of Iowa was also opposed and quoted the Council on Science and Health (Fred Stares creation) as 'Contrary to popular belief, there is no firm evidence to support the premise that reducing saturated fat and cholesterol in your diet will in itself lower your risk of heart disease".

In contrast, to this was Waxman of California who said "This most recent report, Toward Healthful Diets, contrasts poorly with the Academy's traditionally high standards". Panetta of California, Margaret Heckler of Massachusetts and Fred Richmond provided additional support. The witnesses in support in addition to me were Charles Arnold of the Am Health Foundation, Antonio Gotto, Bob Levy, McGinnis, Shelly Margin, Hamish Munro, Jim Turner and Ernst Wynder. Those in opposition included Phil Handler, Pete Ahrens, Harper, Gil Leveille, Bob Olson and Elizabeth Whelan (Am Council on Science and Health).

In contrast to the group of Representatives who attended the Richmond hearings only Eagleton was at his hearings of the Senate committee. I'm not sure what that meant but whatever opposition or support there was within his committee never appeared. Hence they was a lot less interesting than the previous hearings. Eagleton barely had time for us and practically all of the time was devoted to Phil Handler and other opponents. The list of opponents was similar to the other but Phil Handler was the heavy hitter. Phil White of the AMA also appeared.

In both Hearings a major issue was what happened to the original request from Bob Rizek of the Agr Research Service to the NAS in August, 1977, before I was in Washington. He wrote asking for a contract for the FNB to review "the issues raised by the Dietary Goals and make recommendations on the consumption (1) of protein (total and animals), fat, fatty acids, cholesterol, sugar, complex and total carbohydrates, dietary fiber, and sodium and (2) of processed foods of varying degrees of refinement and fortification. Furthermore, the ARS requests that the Board identify the most urgent dietary related public health issues for attention in developing dietary guidelines for the public" Jack Iacono was somehow able to have this request was withdrawn that really irked Phil Handler. Rizek's group fell under my administration rather than ARS when I arrived. .

Rizek's primary activity was in the conduct and analysis of the Food Consumption Surveys. My evaluation of Rizek was that he knew little about nutrition but had a loyal group. It was also clear that he knew how to manipulate the budget. It seemed to me that he was deliberately slow in producing results in order to obtain additional funds. I was disappointed that they seemed to have minimal capacity in statistics even though that should have been a primary strength.

I had one conversation with Jack Iacono in Boston before I arrived in Washington when we agreed that the FNB should not be allowed to evaluate the Dietary Goals but I do not know just how Jack managed to withdraw the request to the Academy. The Consumer Liason Panel of the Board was aware of the position the FNB would take and opposed the proposed contract. According to Jim

Turner's testimony he wrote Agriculture in 1978 asking "the Department to refrain from funding the Food and Nutrition Board's efforts". Jim Turner, representing the Liason Panel, testified that Toward Healthful Diets had failed to reduce the confusion about dietary recommendations and that "the prestige of the Board has slipped"; that the experience with Toward Healthful Diets should "cause both the Academy and the Board to overhaul their food policy activities". How much influence this had on the USDA actions is unclear but Ned Bayley did respond saying that "we have decided to delay any further action...until we have been able to develop satisfactory mechanisms for consumers to be involved...."

In Phil Handler's testimony he said that "The latter (the USDA letter from Risek) was particularly interested and was on the point of contracting for the study when negotiations were suddenly terminated without explanation". He then says that Jim Turner wrote that the panel "had, in some manner, intervened, causing the USDA to withdraw its proposed support. (That boast seems a cross between book-burning and the claim of a terrorist organization for credit for a bombing attack)". Phil funded the study from the "Academy's own modest resources" so that "the report before you is but an abstract...of the report the Board had intended". It is clear that Phil personally pushed the project and was then really upset to have both the content and the integrity of the report and its authors questioned. I don't know if that had ever happened before.

There were some unusual manipulations going on. For example. Shelly Margen, who had been involved in the development of the Dietary Goals, testified that he had been vice-chairman of the FNB; that this position had been abolished without his notification; and had then been reestablished after his 3 year term ended. I think there is no doubt that Handler developed a Board that reflected his views. Margen also testified that he would favor having the Academy set up a special task force "to look at this whole question" only "if I were assured that Academy would actually select the most qualified people.." But, he said "It appears to me that ...this has been done". He was referring to the Committee of the ASCN whose report we used.

Hamish Munro who was chairman of the Dietary Allowance Committee of the FNB testified that what the RDA had to say about fat and cholesterol was more or less in line with the Dietary Guidelines. When questioned by Richmond about how that could happen when the same group published Toward Healthful Diets he said "I can only suggest there was a lack of communication between the members".

At the Eagleton hearings Bertrand, Carol Foreman and I were put last on the list when he, and everyone else, was anxious to get finished. The whole hearing was obviously to oppose the Guidelines yet I find this statement of Eagleton most

interesting. "The point I would make is that all of you at this table are going to regret it when the day come when producer interests will overwhelm the health determination. I don't know when this will come.....But I think the scientific community will some day regret that this is a joint venture and that the scientific community would feel much more comfortable if the decision were to be made by the department....whose primary responsibility is health, health research, and the like." The argument seems a bit out of place here. Most of the testimony had been that the Guidelines were simply inappropriate yet Eagleton was arguing that the USDA should not have been involved in their development. In many administrations I might have supported this argument. Most USDA administrations, and I suspect this one too had I, Jack Iacono and Carol Foreman not been there, would have favored agricultural interests.

Carol argued, of course, that the USDA does have responsibility for these many food programs and had long been involved in providing nutritional advice. It would be awkward, indeed, if the USDA was simply subservient to HHS. She listed dozens of acts of Congress going back to 1935 which gave various kinds of authority to the USDA. A major one, of course, was the recent Farm Bill which designated the USDA "as lead agency in the Federal Government for agricultural research, extension, and teaching in the food and agricultural sciences." The same act says the department should "disseminate results of food and human nutrition research". Carol must have known at least some of the issues the senator would raise in order to have that list available.

When these hearings ended one of Eagleton's staff came up and said something like "you have to remember that Eagleton has to respond for the Iowa Beef Producers". Being a representative of all of your constituents may put you into positions you may not enjoy.

Some beginnings were made to modify the school lunch and a couple of educational publications were developed related to the Dietary Guidelines. Some of the limitations of what the USDA or the government agencies can do were obvious. A hundred thousand copies do not go very far. Any effort at nutrition education obviously depends upon a lot of other groups who must pick up and expand the message.

At this stage, of course, the Reagan administration came in. The Secretary was John Brock who, I think, had been agricultural commissioner in Indiana and was a hog farmer. His Deputy was Richard Lyng who had been president of the American Meat Institute. Someone told me that Lyng had said that they would approve the Dietary Guidelines "over his dead body". My job was abolished. My guess is that this was illegal in view of the Farm Bill but no one picked up on it. There appeared to no one on the

Hill to defend us. Abolishing a job is one of the few easy ways to get rid of a beaucocrat but, strangely, they did not fire me. Rather I was "promoted" to something called a senior scientist. I have always regretted that I did not get a copy of my job description. It read as though everyone from the president on down would have been consulting me.

I had been effectively kicked upstairs. I had not a single responsibility. And one is really limited in what one can do because your secretary - I shared one with Edminster - has to report weekly on your activities. I knew they were looking over my shoulder and I didn't want to get the secretary in trouble so I had to be careful. I had started to put together a book but I was told that I could not work on that on government time. They actually gave me an official reprimand for accepting the Eleanor Naylor Dana Award from the American Health Foundation. I told Bertrand that I really didn't give a damn although I think I had followed protocol by showing the invitation to Bertrand before accepting.

I suppose some might consider it an ideal job. I was drawing a good salary with no responsibility. I thought that they might do something sensible if I waited but it became clear that that would not happen. I thought I might just wait them out. There was one person on the staff who had spent a term in exile in the library before being brought back to work. Obviously, if I had tried to wait for a Democratic administration, I would have had a very long wait. Eventually I gave up.

In retrospect I suppose the smartest thing for me to have done would have been to have them transfer me to the USDA lab at Tufts. I was not all that enthusiastic to be in a lab being administered by Hamish Munro. Jean Mayer had made an attempt to recruit me but at Tufts but Stan Gershoff had no available funds. The New England Regional Primate Research Center administered by Ron Hunt had a substantial grant from Frito-Lay that I had helped set up and was being run by Bob Nicolosi. Ron Hunt had demonstrated that new world primates required vitamin D3 and could not utilize D2 - an important finding which allowed their maintenance in captivity and for which we received a prize. So when they offered me the job of Associate Director for Research I accepted. It turned out that there was not a lot of interest in Nutrition at the Primate Center. The few things we did try did not progress very well and eventually Bob went to the Univ of Lowell. So I have enjoyed the association and appreciate their consideration, especially providing some space after I retired, it has not been all that productive. Fortunately we still had our house. If we had sold it we would never have been able to afford to live in Wellesley.

One final comment. The USDA and HHS soon appointed a committee to review the Dietary Guidelines. The committee included Bob Olson

and Fred Stare - both on record as having opposed the Guidelines. It also included Dave Kritchevsky who has supported practically every side of every issue and Henry Kamin who had been chairman of the Dietary Allowance Committee and a close associate of Phil Handler. Bob Levy, head of the Heart Institute, however, was a strong supporter. The remaining members - Bernie Schweigert, Lester Salan, Sandy Miller and Judy Stern - were unknown quantities with regard to the Guidelines, as far as I knew but I thought Schweigert - more of an animal nutritionist - would probably be against. So I expected the worst - a near total disavowal of the Guidelines. To my surprise the actual Guidelines were Eat A variety of Foods, Maintain a Desirable Weight, Avoid too MUch Fat, Saturated Fat and Cholesterol, Eat Foods with Adequate Fiber, Avoid Too Much Sugar, Avoid Too Much Sodium and If You Drink Alcohol, do So in Moderation - Essentially the same as the original. Several committees over the years have reviewed the Guidelines and they still remain nearly intact. I have said that if I were to re-do them now I would make two modifications. I would include a serving or two of fish per week and put more emphasis on the importance of fruits and vegetables.

Over the years numerous Heart Associations around the world made recommendations similar to the Am heart Assoc. I don't recall the dates but I believe that the Am Public Health Assoc and perhaps a few other groups came out in support of the Guidelines. At least some of the scientific opposition decreased. In my opinion the major breakthrough came with the appointment of the NRC Committee on Diet and Cancer. Phil Handler had died and the Food and Nutrition Board was not in very good standing. The review committee and then the President of the Academy rejected the Recommended Dietary Allowances from the FNB. Kamin, Phil's pal, had been chairman of that committee. They had said they were "going to get some science into the recommendations" and had cut several of the levels. I was one of the reviewers who recommended rejection. In any event, the Diet and Cancer Committee was not given to the Food and Nutrition Board - an obvious slap at the Board. I testified at one of their hearings. In any event the publication of Diet and Health supported all of the relevant issues in the Guidelines. The next step, as far as the Academy was concerned, was the appointment of the Committee on Diet and Health. Their large report - Diet and Health - provided essentially complete support for the Dietary Guidelines. Although there are a few holdouts still, even the AMA eventually came around. The Guidelines became national nutrition policy. No doubt the Guidelines will be modified over the years but they represent a signal accomplishment and a landmark in Nutrition.