

send Levy me

August 18, 1977

Professor Ratko Buzina
Zavod Za Zastitu Zdravlja
Sr Hrvatske
Institut of Public Health of SR Croatia
Rockefellerova, 7
Zagreb -- Yugoslavia

Dear Ratko:

Inconcur with your feeling of disappointment that our collaboration has not continued apace. Confidentially, I found it necessary to back away from a larger role in the Seven Countries Study in order to survive academically and personally in the latter years of our mentor's administration here. Since taking over his chair, my primary concern has been to develop a strong program locally. The general mood of the University, and for that matter, the country, is to concentrate on local affairs rather than international wanderings (which are always unpopular with Deans, funding agencies, and, of course, wives).

In addition to these important professional factors, I have become head of a division embracing the Laboratory, Public Health Nutrition and Health Education. With this, we have had to assume important responsibilities for pre-doctoral and post-doctoral training toward degrees which we have never had before, undergraduate teaching, which we have had very little of before, and a number of School of Public Health administrative functions that the Laboratory had never participated in. I respect Ancel's keeping clear of administrative engagements and concentrating on research, but in this day and time one must be a "balanced" academic department, carrying out all needed services of such a department. The luxury of a "research institute" is over.

I guess I must say that in the last five years there has not been a lot of terribly obvious and exciting leads for descriptive epidemiological studies into causes. I have concentrated our eneggies in this country on intervention programs. I hasten to add that I think your analysis of obesity in adolescence is a highly appropriate one and we vigorously share your interest. We have been engaged in, and have been fortunate enough to receive funding, in examining such things as the effect of prescribed physical activity in the obese and in those with glucose intolerance and diabetes. I am also enthusiastic about getting more involved in studies to follow and modify risk characteristics in childhood.

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The possibility of documenting cultural changes over the past two decades and in the next period, monitoring simultaneously changes in health-related behavior and morbidity and mortality, experience is very central to our interests. Obviously the situation in Yugoslavia must be quite interesting in that regard. I suppose I have assumed that you or the Framingham-Belgrade Axis would be pursuing this matter vigorously.

At any rate, this is an expression of pleasure that you should extend the invitation and of interest in whatever proposal you might have in mind. I have an active staff of 15 fulltime academic faculty among which are some young and vigorous people who would be happy to carry a load of a collaborative undertaking. These include Ronald Prineas, who is a cardiologist-epidemiologist from the London School, Richard Gillum, cardiologist-epidemiologist from Harvard, Russell Luepker, cardiologist-epidemiologist from Harvard, Art Leon, cardiologist-work physiologist involved in obesity studies, Richard Grimm, a third year post-doctoral fellow cardiologist, David Jacobs, statistician with remarkable abilities as an independent investigator, and Terry Pechacek, post-doctoral fellow in behavioral sciences interested in these problems, etc. Moreover, the funding for community monitoring and intervention projects that we eventually anticipate is probably not in the immediate offing and thus we might indeed be susceptible to a collaborative arrangement if you have ideas of potential funding.

Finally, I would like to indicate to you that we are actively recruiting for a Director of Public Health Nutrition, a very substantial position in the School of Public Health, who would head that program and collaborate with the Lab in the Division. If you know anyone who has successfully cloned a Ratko Buzina, with combined research and public health interests, we will be delighted to try to recruit such a person.

I have plans to be in Southern Europe a very few days at the end of September at a rather small congress on prevention developed by Professor Critelli and others at Naples to be held in Catanzaro. I plan to spend one day with Mario, probably September 27, a day with Ancel, probably September 28 and visit Catanzaro September 29 to October 2. Nelly and I will be then flying directly to New Zealand where I will be the Heart Foundation guest lecturer for the month of October. I do hope you will let us know of your next visit to these shores so that we can make definite arrangements to get out there.

Again, many thanks for your letter and cordial regards,

Henry Blackburn, M.D.
Professor and Director

you
HB/

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RB/C

10 August, 1977

Professor Henry Blackburn
Director, Laboratory of Physiological Hygiene
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Minneapolis 55455
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*Ann. Reply is on
page
Concept*

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AUG 16 1977

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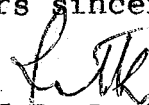
Dear Henry,

It is a pity that our cooperation has come practically to a standstill. I am also sorry that despite the few opportunities I had to visit the East Coast in the past 2-3 years I was unable to spare enough time to visit you in Minneapolis.

The last couple of years were very busy for us as we were heavily involved in a community nutrition program in cooperation with CDC, Atlanta. Now that the final report has been completed we are at the stage of developing new projects one of which may also interest you. Among these, the project titled "Early obesity and risk factors of coronary heart disease" has already been started on a pilot scale aiming to study at what age obesity becomes associated with such variables as elevated blood pressure, cholesterol, and triglycerides - the very well known CHD risk factors.

I am writing to you to find out whether you would be interested in cooperating in this study. There is at present the possibility of developing joint projects again between USA and this country which may give us an opportunity to work together. Please let me know your views so that I can give you more details about this cooperation.

With best regards,
Yours sincerely,



Prof. Dr. Ratko Buzina