



UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA
TWIN CITIES

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School of Public Health
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Minneapolis, Minnesota 55455

*Confidential corres - Faculty +
Adm. Group*

January 14, 1982

PERSONAL & CONFIDENTIAL

TO: LPH Faculty and Administrative Group
FROM: Henry Blackburn
RE: Commitment

Along with each of you these days, I suspect, I have taken a harder look at my commitment to the administration of MHHP and of the Laboratory. Aside from our obvious problems in management of these large undertakings, there is also a question of motivation and commitment. In my desire and "style" to recruit good people and give them administrative responsibility in career development, I have been less than effective in my supervision of their activities or in my persuasive abilities to achieve dedication. Several of you have recently recognized some of your limitations and modified your commitment. I have had revealed to me in various subtle and not subtle ways your, and my own, deficiencies, missed opportunities, and insufficient motivations. Since administrative careers are not what most of us choose, we are tending to do an inadequate job and with inadequate commitment. One most recent and disastrous experience was to "leave it all to you-know who" which very badly damaged us. In defense, I might add that I sought his collaboration, but did not achieve or command it.

Certain intellectual pleasures and satisfactions we get from academic functions have become a welcome escape from unpleasantness in dealing with tough issues and aggressive personalities who want to "run the show" and naturally, otherwise aggrandize. This has led me in particular to avoid some of the real responsibilities I hold in the administration of MHHP and of the Laboratory. In fact, my career satisfactions, as well as yours, depend on the success of our present undertakings. Despite improvement, we are still today threatened by avoidance, insufficient collaboration and some inappropriate commitments all around as well as by the obvious economic, personal, and personnel stresses we all feel.

Thus, I would like now to confirm my commitment to you and ask you to re-examine what is truly important to you and the Lab. One way I can do this is to indicate what I have done to "outside" obligations, which I have always heretofore considered very important to the Lab and to me.

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This includes cancelling a number of weeks of travel this year (using the bonafide excuse of the stresses of the economy on our institution), cancelling my carefully devised mini-sabbatical, and other conferences in Sicily, Switzerland, etc., many continued education programs, as well as journal editorships, etc. My scheduled travels remaining are those most directly related to long-term commitments, or our existing programs, or to what I think are future LPH needs.

Having made this sacrificial gesture and attendant conversion, I will, like all serious new converts, be taking a look at the commitments of my colleagues. I could not in the past criticize others' "less relevant" undertakings when I was so guilty of them myself. Perhaps I can now more credibly expect the same commitment to the Lab program from each of you and encourage you to make changes immediately for the coming year. We will then see how much you join and share with me the conviction that there is no future, or only a very different future, for you and for the Laboratory without making most of what we have in front of us. Some of our faculty, not directly or heavily involved in the larger awards currently in operation, need a new commitment to develop research in their assigned specialty areas.

Enclosed is my list of commitments for the year and what I have done with them. They result in cancellation of over 40 professional days away from the Lab plus the mini-sabbatical, and resignation from the editorial boards of four journals, and stopping all regular journal review functions, resignation from the NASA Space Shuttle Experimental Advisory Group, from the National Academy of Sciences Committee on Food Consumption Patterns, and refusal of all site visit and study section invitations. I am hoping this will improve my understanding of and effectiveness in LPH direction and that I might see efficiencies "in kind" among you. How about it?

Many thanks.

HB/ljb

Enclosure

Henry Blackburn's
1982
TENTATIVE TRAVEL SCHEDULE

JANUARY~~3-8~~

22

Elected Office: Nominating Committee. American Association
for the Advancement of Science Meeting, Washington, DC
MMMP Retreat, Eastcliff

FEBRUARY

5-6

~~14-19~~

17-18

Chairman, Advisory Group, NHLBI Preventive Cardiology Branch
10-Year Plan, Bethesda, MD
Faculty, Cardiology at Big Sky, MT
Lead speaker, Lipid Symposium, San Francisco, CA

MARCH

4

5-7

~~14-21 24~~~~25-27~~

PBS Television Production on CHD Prevention, Dallas, TX
AHA 22nd Annual Conference on Cardiovascular Disease Epidemiology,
San Antonio, TX
Visiting Professor, University of Central Florida, Orlando, FL
Invited lecturer, European Society of Cardiology, Brussels, England

APRIL~~1-2~~~~3-4~~

5-6

~~7-9~~

29

American Epidemiological Society Meeting, Kansas City, MO
Invited presentation on CHD Prevention, UNC, Chapel Hill, NC
Member, AHA Nutrition Committee Meeting, Dallas, TX
Panelist, ACC 31st Scientific Session, Atlanta, GA
Presentation on Prevention at Medical and Chirurgical Faculty of
the State of Maryland Annual Meeting and on Community Strategies
at Johns Hopkins University, Baltimore, MD

MAY

4-5

~~6-8~~~~10-16~~

17-18

University of Minnesota Preventive Cardiology Advisory Group
Meeting, Spring Hill
Tulane Hot Jazz Classic Set, New Orleans, LA
Faculty, International School of Cardiology, Erice, Sicily
MHHP Scientific Advisory Board Meeting, Spring Hill

JUNE

3-5

14-18

20-26

~~28~~

Award of Honorary Doctorate Degree from the University of Kuopio, Finland
Presenter, 6th International Symposium on Atherosclerosis, West Berlin
Presenter, World Congress of Cardiology, Moscow, U.S.S.R.
University of Sussex, Brighton, England

JULY~~21-24~~

Third Seminar on the International Society on Comparative Physical
Education and Sport, Minneapolis, MN

AUGUST~~1-13~~~~4-8~~

9-13

Faculty, AHA U.S. Seminar, Tahoe, CA
International Platform Association Convention, Washington, D.C.
Invited participant, International Workshop on Genetic Factors
in Nutrition, Mexico City

SEPTEMBER

~~20-24~~

WHO Scientific Group on Primary Prevention of Essential Hypertension, Geneva, Switzerland

~~27-30~~

Third Conference on Mild Hypertension, Bürgenstock, Switzerland

OCTOBER

~~18-19~~

Invited presentation, Conference on Nutrition in Pediatrics, Cincinnati, OH

NOVEMBER

DECEMBER

3-5

American Bureau for Medical Advancement in China, Taiwan