

March 15, 1977

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Dear Dr. Hueg:

I was interested in the recent remarks of Senator Dole with regard to the Senate Select Committee on Nutrition recommendations for the U.S. national diet. Rather than reacting in a partisan fashion, he made a rather perceptive remark along the following lines: "Lots of our farmers are having coronaries. Whatever American agriculture needs to do for American health we can do - and the farmers can still make a good living at it."

We would very much like to participate with agricultural experts and economists in making estimates of how the recommendations of the Senate Committee might best be implemented in an evolutionary way, and the economic impact they would have in the agro-economy. I would think it would be perceptive and useful and courageous for a small group at Minnesota to make independent estimates of this impact which would help in advising the government on how best to proceed, with minimal derangement of the economy.

Clearly, this would have to take into consideration such major issues as breeding and feeding practices to achieve leaner meats, increased energy conversion involving poultry and fish and decreased energy conversion to red meats, disposition of large amounts of butter fat with increasing use of low-fat milk products, concentration on the poultry side of the poultry-egg industry, considerations for the oil and shortening industry to reduce the amount of hydrogenated fats used in food preparation, considerations for the snack and rapid food industry, and evolutionary processes to reduce tobacco production and consumption.

It would seem to me that sound planning would benefit the agro-industry long-term and would be consonant with health recommendations and important energy policies for the future.

I think we have gone as far as we can go at Minnesota in open joint seminars and discussion. I refer back to my initial memo to you in which was hoped that very small working groups of reasonable people accept and work with alternatives and advices that are now facing the American public. I am still optimistic that

Dr. William F. Hueg

-2-

March 15, 1977

we have reasonable people on this campus. I had thought earlier that you and I had agreed there was a problem of overconsumption, as well as possible reasonable recommendations concerning modification in diet composition.

I guess now I would like to explore whether there is anyone on the Institute staff willing to consider the possibility that current recommendations must be considered, at least to the degree to make estimates of the impact of their implementation. If not, perhaps we could explore together whether this is being done in Secretary Bergland's office or elsewhere.

Cordially,

Henry Blackburn, M.D.

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