



CC: Drs. Gary Friedman and Jeremiah Stamler
Leonard Cook

DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION, AND WELFARE
PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICE
NATIONAL INSTITUTES OF HEALTH

NATIONAL INSTITUTES OF HEALTH
NATIONAL HEART INSTITUTE
HEART DISEASE EPIDEMIOLOGY STUDY
123 LINCOLN STREET
FRAMINGHAM, MASSACHUSETTS 01701

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LAB OF PHYSIOLOGICAL
HYGIENE

Dr. Henry Blackburn
University of Minnesota
Laboratory of Physiological Hygiene
School of Public Health
Stadium Gate 27
Minneapolis, Minnesota 55455

Dear Henry:

I must say I sympathize with you about George Mann. I too find it hard to determine to what extent he dissents out of conviction when he is obviously in the pay of the food industry. I agree with Will Rogers that the difference between legal and illegal is whether money changes hands.

However, we can always hope that if we give George enough rope he will hang himself. I think for any thoughtful person his letter in the Journal did that. How can anyone take him seriously when he disparages the diet-lipid-coronary heart disease hypothesis as based on flimsy evidence and at the same time espouses the exercise hypothesis which we all know is based on even less evidence?

I think we are trying to apply rational solutions to what is basically an emotional issue. I sometimes think we should handle fellows like George Mann by ignoring them. They get far more attention than they deserve. I think he has a right to state his opposition to the Council on Epidemiology's position on anything. I don't think he has the right to actively undermine its activities unless he resigns from the organization. I must confess that there are times when George seems to have crossed the line where tolerance and forbearance are no longer an acceptable response.

I agree that this issue should be taken up at our next executive committee meeting.

Cordially,

Bill

William B. Kannel, M. D.
Medical Director