

October 7, 1974

Professor Ancel Keys
"Minnelea"
84060 Pioppi (Salerno)
ITALY

Dear Ancel:

We enjoy and envy the accounts of your gardening and pleasant meals. Things move along rather well here. I am enclosing an all-too-hastily prepared grant submission on CVD analyses for your information. These are areas of general interest to the lab. and could provide sustenance to continued building of an effective data processing center and staff. Of course, your ideas would be welcomed, including topics you might want to pursue therein.

You are also aware, I'm sure, that I have obtained major support from NHLI to pursue the "Epidemiology of Sudden Death", and if you've not read those grants you may want to do so on your next return (see enclosed face page). You have been good enough to recognize the particular province of the ECG and prognosis which I am pursuing and will pursue with 10-year Seven Country endpoints as the area of my central contribution and interest. I hope that I will be exploiting it in a way which will satisfy and recognize you and the other collaborators, and we will work on this together on your return. A series of ECG articles should do this, and, of course, I continue to think of an eventual book on ECG Prediction.

But with our present NHLI support on "Sudden Death", and our current leadership (and editorship) of the enclosed major national program on the topic, there is a need for us to explore vigorously the precursors of Sudden Coronary Death Outside Hospital (SCDOH) using in part the Seven Countries material. I hope and believe that we can do this without major problems or conflicts with your plans for 10 year presentations.

It would help very much to see a time-table and an outline of what you anticipate in those 10 year publications. Again will it be a major monograph, or rather a series of papers, etc.? I believe it should be possible for us to perform needed analyses now on SCDOH without usurping importantly any priority of publication of the Seven Countries 10 year results. Our preparation for the present conference proceedings ((to be in a Circulation supplement) I propose to contain a very brief abstract, not a major review, about the enhancement (or lack thereof) of discrimination of SCDOH subjects by the addition of detailed frequencies of VPB (baseline rest and post-ex) to that from a 3-factor risk score based on the Sudden Death Endpoint. This would make no reference to HARD CHD, NFMI, ANY CHD, or Total Mortality Endpoints.

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I have based the current analyses on a detailed SCDOH review I have just made of all USRR (and also Finnish) death data, as on the enclosed memo to Dave.

If you should feel strongly that no non-U.S. data should be used in any such form of publication now I would like to know about it. If you have no major objection, please suggest the Finnish Co-authors. Of course, we will send it to them for review. Obviously Menotti will be a co-author.

I should let you know that I consider the USRR 10 year material, to which HLT and I gave several years of our lives, is quite available to our current exploitation on ECG and Sudden Death topics, always seeking your review but without regard to publication priorities of other Seven Countries data. I sincerely hope that you are comfortable with this. We do, of course, need and want your active review and advice, participation and co-authorship on any and all specific USRR publications. Actually the time table of your major 10 year Seven Country analyses may eliminate any conflict of interest at all, and that would be happy.

Basically, I believe this course of events, dictated by our present LPH support and interests, is compatible with a very healthy sharing and distribution of authorship of the U.S. and other Seven Countries collaborators. It in no serious way intercedes on your direction of the major 10 year analysis of Seven Countries endpoints of primary interest. It results in a sharpening of one of the CHD related endpoints (SCDOH) needed and missing from the earlier monograph, and allows us to pursue together this facet of the problem in greater detail, and in some separate publications rather than burying it only in a mass of other material. It can and should appear also in those materials in which you will be senior coauthor. Actually more work is needed to bring completely up to date the USRR data on SCDOH but the SCDOH endpoints I have listed are quite firm from death certificate information and enough in numbers for us to proceed with analyses for the SCDOH Symposium next week.

I welcome your comments on these matters and assure you of my fundamental respect for your priority in the Seven Countries publication. We are simply in immediate need to exploit specific data on the relationship of ectopic rhythms to sudden death outside hospital, and want to keep you actively informed and involved.

The fall was lovely but very short. I hope Madrid was worth your while.

Cordially,

Henry Blackburn, M.D.
Professor and Director, and
Professor of Medicine

HB:jp
enclosures

PC + Sudden Death Program to Dr Grande Address
+ to Dr Leopoldo De Osuna
+ original letter, S.D. Program, front pg of
Sudden Death grant + orig Copy of Agency
grant minus CV's. to Italy