

May 30, 1975

Oglesby Paul, M.D.
Northwestern University
339 East Chicago Ave.
Chicago, Illinois 60611

Dear Oley:

In regard to your May 15th letter concerning the Winkelstein editorial, please be assured that I was not proposing that you make "editorial denunciations", or otherwise engage in alley fights. I do feel however, that when one of the outstanding leaders in public health in this country, a well known epidemiologist, and a person active in Heart Association activities, writes an editorial about MRFIT, the most important preventive trial today in coronary disease, and when that editorial is full of factual errors and grievous misconceptions about the design and aims of that study, that the scientific leadership of that study should in a very sober reply point out those errors. Whether or not anyone else on the Steering Committee has brought up this issue, I am quite sure that such an irresponsible editorial from high places unfavorably influences professional and public attitudes toward, and support for, this effort. It makes a lovely pair with Corday's editorial!

I happen to be of the persuasion, as Walter Cannon said years ago, that if by design or by faulty design, "error is found to be creeping into the beautiful edifice of science," then efforts "must be made to remove that error." I think I can understand and appreciate an opposite attitude, without sharing it. But I feel, personally, that Winkelstein has done a disservice to the MRFIT study and NHLI programs, and I believe his misconceptions should be corrected as if not in public, at least privately, with the hope that he might be big enough to retract. And the most appropriate person to do this I am sure, is yourself.

Very cordially yours,

Henry Blackburn, M.D.

HB/kn

cc: Jerry Stamler
William Zukel
Nemat Borhani
Marc Kjelsberg

*Signed
& sent*

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VICE-PRESIDENT FOR
HEALTH SCIENCES

May 13, 1975

WIEBOLDT HALL
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LAB OF PHYSIOLOGICAL
HYGIENE

Henry Blackburn, M.D.
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Hygiene
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Stadium Gate 27
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reply on tape.

Dear Henry:

I am sorry for not replying earlier to your letter of April 30 regarding a possible reply of MRFIT to the Winkelstein editorial in the March American Journal of Epidemiology. We did not discuss this I am afraid at the Steering Committee meeting which was probably an oversight on my part. All I can say is that the matter was not brought up by anyone else.

I do agree that it is an appropriate topic for discussion although I am not personally one that enjoys vigorous editorial exchanges and denunciations.

I believe someone would have to be selected who would be appropriate to take this role. Would you like to do so? If you would not like to do this yourself, would you like to make a suggestion of an appropriate person?

I would think that the proper task would be to select a possible writer and then send this information to Harold Schnaper for his consideration and for the consideration of his committee.

With warmest regards,

Sincerely,

Ogley

Oglesby Paul, M.D.

OP/lin

cc: Charles Kaelber, M.D.