

April 28, 1975

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Dear Geoff:

I was sorry to hear about your father-in-law and to have missed you in my recent brief visit. I had a delightful exchange with Donald and Jerry Morris.

I was excited by your German presentation and your mention of the persistent slope of the relationship between primary risk factors and coronary disease incidence in the intermediate group in which we have both long been interested, i.e. with London Questionnaire symptoms and Minnesota Code non-specific ECG items. We have similar analyses underway for the ten years Seven Countries data. Though you will probably publish prior to us, and we will probably publish separately from you, I was thinking how nice it might be if we should write an editorial together, perhaps for Circulation, Lancet or the New England Journal of Medicine, in the usual sequence of authorship (that is, Rose-Blackburn), calling attention to what I consider a significant if small hunk of information about this intermediate category of persons at risk.

As you know, we were able, after much persuasion, to build into MRFIT design the retention of individuals who have certain minor electrocardiographic findings and positive electrocardiographic responses to effort, so that we might examine this subgroup hypothesis in terms of the potential for prevention.

Later on in the summer when you have your material ready for publication it might be useful for us to exchange material and consider further whether the editorial is warranted.

I gave Donald further details on my present misery with the Egg Council, and will let you know how the hearings emerge. My slight concern with interfering with the process of "justice" by informing the British witnesses of the Egg Council techniques is overbalanced by my desire that they know with what and whom they are dealing. I am therefore enclosing copies. I will not be writing Professor Yudkin because he is clearly beyond the pale.

I believe that the Federal Trade Commission has a strong case and strong witnesses (with the exception of the lead off witness, myself) but there remains a big question as to whether the administrative law judge will limit the debate to the critical points and will be impressed with the vicious nature of the advertising and the personally degrading campaign of the Egg Council lawyers. I regard the principal issue as the attempt to silence recommendations of the Heart Association.

The enclosed allegory about Plum Brandy has meaning to only a few people aware of the goings-on, and is not a terribly good analogy, but I find it necessary to seek some humor in the situation. I find that satire tends to make vague issues somehow clearer.

I had an interesting time in Paris and it seems that my mediocre talents in the French language may be of some use to them in their preventive efforts. I talked to a group of 200 practitioners directly concerned with professional education throughout France and on another occasion to the Association of Paris Cardiologists and my simple message was well received - due no doubt to its novelty for that audience. It appears that the practitioners in France and the group of cardiologists may undertake more effective efforts than the current limited and purely descriptive studies of the GREA. One of my contacts is a very ambitious and effective young man, Dr. Yves Nadjari, who however, has little guidance. It is conceivable that the French may be interested in collaborative efforts that you might have in mind on the Continent. Dr. Nadjari is consulting physician for Renault Auto Manufacturers.

I am hoping that you will be available for an extended visit when I attend Barry Lewis' Symposium, June 10-12, and I'll keep you advised on travel plans.

Cordially,

Henry Blackburn, M.D.

HB/kn

Encl: Plum Brandy