

November 15, 1977

Dr. Arthur C. Upton, Director
National Cancer Institute
National Institutes of Health
Bethesda, Maryland 20014

Dear Doctor Upton:

Congratulations on your appointment and new responsibilities. I was fascinated to read in an interview by Mr. Barnhill of your interest in the environmental and behavioral influences in cancer. A proper balance between researches in this area and the traditional pursuits of the Institute is much needed.

I was more than a little distressed this week to see the public pronouncement of Dr. Peter Bourne indicating that the "safe" cigarette is the only reasonable public health measure in smoking. This simply indicates, I'm afraid, his lack of awareness about the very distinct changes in smoking behavior possible in a medical setting, demonstrated in the NHLBI MRFIT clinics around the country, and more importantly, community-wide approaches that combine mass media, community organization of medical facilities and reasonable environmental constraints on smoking. These "social pressures" and supports for not smoking are paying off in many segments of society, and much more is anticipated with persistent campaigns.

At any rate, best wishes in your important undertaking.

Sincerely,

Henry Blackburn, M.D.
Professor and Director and
Chairman, Division of Health
and Human Behavior

HB:msh

pc: Dr. Peter Bourne
The White House