



UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA
TWIN CITIES

Laboratory of Physiological Hygiene
School of Public Health
Stadium Gate 27
611 Beacon Street S.E.
Minneapolis, Minnesota 55455

CONF. COMMENTS - KIRSCHSTEIN

January 11, 1982

Dr. Ruth Kirschstein, Director
The National Institute of
General Medical Sciences
National Institutes of Health
Building 31, Room 4A52
Bethesda, MD. 20205

PERSONAL AND CONFIDENTIAL

Dear Dr. Kirschstein:

This letter is in relation to your function as chairperson of the Search Committees for Director of the National Heart, Lung and Blood Institute. I can imagine your problem! I am sure you will keep confidential these personal comments.

With respect to internal candidates, the individual having the widest respect among the community of cardiovascular investigators is, I believe, Dr. Jerry Greene. His breadth of understanding of cardiovascular research and training issues, and his mature and level judgment are widely regarded. Other internal candidates I have heard about have particularly strong points, but I suggest without the breadth of understanding or the maturity of judgment of Dr. Greene in my view.

Among external candidates, I've heard that Dr. Thomas James is one. The community has the highest respect for his special skills. He has, however, demonstrated, in his recent function as president of the American Heart Association, a complete absence of understanding for whole areas of research on the prevention of cardiovascular diseases and a highly individual, arbitrary, and adversarial approach to matters of public health and medical care policy, which could create serious schisms in my view.

My particular qualifications to pass on these gratuitous judgments include past and present service on Steering Committees of a number of larger NIH studies and trials, on the Advisory Council to the Cardiology Branch, currently chairing the Advisory Group to the Preventive Cardiology Branch, and long service on the Epidemiology and Disease Control Study Section.

Cordially,

Henry Blackburn, M.D.
Professor and Director

HB/jml