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Dear Kevin:

I don't know how much Norm Lasser's recent letter to you reflects what really happened at your meeting. On the other hand, there was a very important meeting last summer of many people in the Heart Association, including some that are rather negative on the diet issue, which came up with a very strong recommendation that the American Heart Association not retreat at all from its position and priorities in regard to dietary recommendations. Perhaps you would be good enough to let me know what actually happened and what you think it means so I can convey this to the Nutrition Committee which has something to say about this priority.

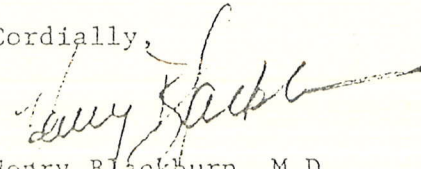
It would indeed be inconsistent with a 20-year position, and with the evidence, if American Heart were to substantially change its position. I doubt a group on priorities could make such a decision without consultation with the Nutrition Committee, Scientific Councils, and other aspects of Heart Association leadership.

But I am sounding off without knowing the facts. Please let me know what was meant by his letter and statement about a priority committee "down-playing the importance of nutrition programming for the American Heart Association."

There will shortly appear a report by a WHO Expert Committee on Prevention that suggests that a small downward shift in the total distribution of LDL levels in population has in fact the greatest potential for modifying population experience in atherosclerosis. The current negative swing on the diet-heart issue I think is a result of failure to examine the population evidence or to separate the issue of individual risk and individual variations from the issue of population distributions and risk.

I would be very pleased to see a copy of your Committee's report.

Cordially,


Henry Blackburn, M.D.
Professor and Director

HB/jml

bpc: S. Grundy
M.J. Jesse
J. Stamler
cc: N. Lasser

*✓ 2/9/82
gve*