

December 15, 1976

Honorable Walter F. Mondale  
Senator from Minnesota  
443 Old Senate Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20510

Dear Senator Mondale:

Theodore Cooper has been a very effective Assistant Secretary for Health, I believe, and I hope that he will be able to find some useful function within the next administration. Though I personally support him, I would like to suggest that over the long run the administration think in terms of putting someone in this or similar high health positions having a primary career involvement with public health matters. It has been a painful and sometimes slow education process to take distinguished clinicians, or public health line officers, or clinical investigators and put them into responsible HEW positions where the primary concern is the health of the entire public in contrast to views on medical care of the research or practicing community.

I would simply like to plant this (surely unoriginal) idea in your mind; i.e., that it would be worth a gamble to have such national leadership in the hands of a distinguished figure whose primary interest is the health of the public and whose expertise derives from preventive disciplines.

I would be glad to suggest names if you are interested; a leading candidate in my mind would be Dr. Richard Remington, Dean of the School of Public Health at the University of Michigan. There are others.

Sincerely yours,

Henry Blackburn, M.D.  
Professor and Director, and  
Professor of Medicine

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