

Colleges - Crow

UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA
TWIN CITIES

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February 11, 1982

TO: Richard Crow

FROM: Henry Blackburn

SUBJECT: Concerning Policy on "Running" Programs in Educated Communities

I am, of course, very embarrassed to be in a negative and squelching position on running activities in our educated communities. I think, however, we can reach consensus if we understand that it is basically our desire to encourage young people to stay vigorous and those adults who desire it to gradually and safely take up vigorous activity. However, I do not feel that this is accomplished by the hullabaloo of mass races. I also do not believe that the identification of the program with such undertakings is justified because I do not regard those activities as healthful or as models for people to aspire to. As to public relation's value, as far as I am concerned, it is probably not worth it to be identified with any such undertakings. I firmly believe you have quite enough healthful activity to encourage in the community, and that we can have a rational policy concerning sponsorship of events without having to co-sponsor foot races of people who in many cases are unfit and untrained.

So that we don't continue to "beat this horse," I would like to see established as policy that we not support competitive races as a principle, across the board. I suggest that we take a careful look at small group activities that are presented to us with some idea of their health and strategic goals.

I recommend that we concentrate our energies on the other activities listed and that we ask our Mankato medical colleagues to respond to individual invitations to participate in distance runs. If they want to give their credibility and support to it, that's fine and there is no need for Heart Health Program identification.

We must have a direct response to the fitness club and to the Y concerning the school health program, and I would be happy to have the Executive Committee help you compose such a response, after you have reviewed their plans and made recommendations to us. These ideas are, of course, subject to review by me and other investigators if you will articulate the opposing arguments.

Many thanks.

pc: MHHP Executive Committee
D. Wackman

*1/21/82
AW*