

Corres - LaBarthe



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TWIN CITIES

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October 12, 1982

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Dear Dar:

Again in my role as AHA Nutrition Committee Liaison, I had to explain to them what I interpreted the reasons for the Epi Council's recommendation of a Nutrition Section. And again I would like to outline here and in Dallas for our Council their objections. I will also remind you that according to the Arteriosclerosis Council and the Nutrition Committee the action item in the minutes of our last Epi Council executive meeting indicated you would ask for a list of concerns from both these groups about establishing such a section. This has apparently not been carried out. You should be aware that Clarkson of the Arteriosclerosis Council, as well as the Nutrition Committee, have readied their replies and would welcome receiving the request. If you are serious about seeking their concerns, I suggest you write them promptly to get them before Dallas.

Let me reiterate the concerns I have voiced in the Epi Council executive council, reflecting these groups and my objection.

- 1) First is that we are a multi-disciplinary council of behaviorists, epidemiologists, cardiologists, biostatisticians, nurses, and nutritionists and on. It is my view, (I must say I've never understood the executive view), that it is an anachronism to encourage a group to form its own professional organization within our group. Our main strength is multi-disciplinary effort and communication.
- 2) Perhaps the "security" and professional needs of the nutritionists originally concerned are now being met. MRFIT has come to an end and there may not be the same compelling need.

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- 3) You are aware that the Scientific Council above us may be responsive to others' advice when you pass on your plan to create this subsection? They simply may not approve it (is that your "strategy" - to have it blocked there?)
- 4) Nurses still feel they have inadequate identity and clearly can't compete on the same level as other scientific councils. They may not be helping themselves as a result of splitting off.
- 5) The nutritionists in the Epi Council might be more effectively utilized by our executive reviewing dietary, methodology, and security on the Methods and Criteria Committee. For example, I think it would be marvelous to get Pat Elmer working on salt and the NCC people working on coding, and so forth, within our Criteria Committee.
- 6) Couldn't we help by appointing a nutritionist to the Executive Council?
- 7) There is a "remote" concern expressed to me that a nutritionist subsection within our council might "set themselves up" as AHA spokespeople for nutrition. I personally have little concern about that but the Arteriosclerosis Council has considered it.
- 8) Mary Winston who will now staff our council, is an extremely thoughtful and informed person and doesn't like the subsection idea. She might bridge the gap for us, reduce the pressure for the subsection, and suggest many ways in which nutritionists might utilize the opportunities within our council without creating this precedent subsection. The behaviorists and so on along the line might very well follow.
- 9) In discussions of this matter in the Nutrition Committee, I heard from Nancy Ernst that the very excellent, tightly knit and effective group of adherence counsellors in the Lipid Research Centers would like to maintain professional activity and interchange. I would like to suggest that you as Chairman of the Council invite the group and give them explicit instructions on how to apply for membership and fellowship.

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I hope you'll follow-up with the action item proposed last spring and consult with The Council on Arteriosclerosis and the Nutrition Committee on their many concerns about the anticipated nutrition subsection.

Cordially,

Henry Blackburn, M.D.  
Professor and Director

/jml

pc: L. Cook *✓sent/ckb*  
M. Winston

P.S.: I recently learned from Len Cook that we were represented only by Dr. Higgins at the AHA Planning Conference about which we lamented so much last spring in Executive Committee. Did we miss anything? Have we been able to make up for our absence? Were your and Jerry's goals realized in terms of stimulating Council function in policy and communications?

bpc: J. Stamler *✓sent/ckb*