



UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA
TWIN CITIES

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

CONFER - CONFEX

April 27, 1981

Mr. Ogden P. Confer
c/o Hubbard Milling Company
424 North Front Old Town
Mankato, MN. 56001

Dear Mr. Confer:

Congratulations on the lifting of the grain embargo. May it
be good for your business and for Mankato.

Cordially,

Henry Blackburn, M.D.
Professor and Director

HB:jml

pb: MHHP Log

*4/29/81
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Minnesota
Heart Health
Program

file - Confer

Laboratory of Physiological Hygiene □ School of Public Health □ University of Minnesota □ 611 Beacon Street SE □ Mpls., MN 55455 □ (612) 373-3586

October 23, 1981

Mr. Ogden Confer
Hubbard Milling Co.
424 North Front, Old Town
Mankato, MN 56001

Dear Mr. Confer:

Many thanks for standing in again so effectively. The article about cardiac drugs we also found very interesting. Some of them do almost miraculous things for people who have very rare cardiac disorders. For the more common "mass" illnesses we are dealing with, hypertension, angina, heart attacks and strokes, there are also increasingly useful drugs to help people be comfortable and function better. This is the main thrust of medicine, of course, to provide agents to do this more effectively. It is a technology we all support, need and desire for ourselves and our families when they are stricken. As you know, this approach has nothing to do with developing the diseases in the first place or their prevention, and that is of course our main interest here and in the Mankato Heart Health Program.

I was mulling over your "half-serious" thinking about your company's vending machines. The evolution of thinking and action on such matters has been relatively easy in our institution. It has been not so easy but has a good rationale in hospitals. It has been incongruous for us to run a smoking clinic and take federal monies for studying smoking and yet to provide smoking facilities in our institutions. Thus we got acceptance for non-smoking. It is ironic for a hospital which is supposed to be helping people and protecting people's health to sell cigarettes to the patients and to allow smoking in its public areas. Thus, many hospitals have been able to eliminate vending.

But the issue of selling cigarettes in industry is a more interesting one. It's always useful to reduce exposure and the opportunity for exposure as a public health measure. It is always best that it could be developed through a committee on heart health or on smoking which would lay down the rationale and make the decision rather than it being a management decision. However, it seems to me that the Mankato Heart Health Program could provide a good "excuse" for management to try such helpful things. In other words, Hubbard Milling could lay out a list of things it wants to do and a timetable to do them "in support of the Mankato Heart Health Campaign." An executive could then be taken off the hook of making an arbitrary decision under a company's commitment to the Program to provide a healthier working environment. In one year it might be such-and-such a project on smoking (and a logical part of the stop-smoking program is to remove the vending machines) offering people

non-smoking instruction classes and support systems. Next year there might be an exercise break, and the next year something else. It seems to me if there is a rationale, a reason, an excuse, an external commitment such as to the Heart Health Program, this provides a basis for action which would if done out of context seem terribly arbitrary. I'm not advising this, simply pondering the issues and possibilities.

Cordially,

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

HB:lr

pc: J. Fruetel
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MHHP Log