



UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA
TWIN CITIES

Copies - Brandt J

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August 6, 1981

Edward Brandt, M.D.
Assistant Secretary
Public Health Service
200 Independence Avenue S.W.
Washington, D.C. 20201

Dear Dr. Brandt:

This note is about the interest and concern of many in Public Health that the new NIH Director have a broad and balanced view of the institute's research direction. I believe that the evidence from clinical, laboratory, and population studies suggest that mass diseases in the U.S. are very likely interactions between very powerful socio-cultural and behavioral factors with widespread susceptibility. This is well known for hypertension, atherosclerosis, and cancer.

The elegant scholarship of Dr. Frederickson and his fascination with the "baroque beauty of biology," was and is widely respected. However, it would seem that this most important position of scientific leadership in this country should be directed by an individual who understands this interaction of host and environment. The greatest scientific leaders of all ages have understood the connections between mind and body, between community and personal factors, and the interaction of the legacy of evolution with overwhelming socio-cultural influences.

Selection of an individual with this understanding will not be an easy job. There are relatively few great "synthesizers" among our medical scientists who would have the respect both of basic science and of the clinical and public health communities. It would be marvelous if Ted Cooper could be persuaded to come back. A dark horse who is widely respected in the clinical and public health communities might be Dr. Richard Remington, Dean of the School of Public Health at the University of Michigan.

Cordially,

Henry Blackburn, M.D.
Professor and Director

HB:jml