



UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA  
TWIN CITIES

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*copyes - Block*

June 16, 1981

Mr. John R. Block  
Secretary of Agriculture  
Department of Agriculture  
14th and Independence Avenue S.W.  
Washington, D.C. 20250

Dear Secretary Block:

I have just learned today of your intention to dismantle the office of Mark Hegsted. Dr. Hegsted is one of the most distinguished nutritionists in this country and internationally. His research is impeccable and extends over many decades. His contribution to an active collaboration between HEW and USDA for the first time in history is unparalleled. The introduction into agricultural economic policy of health considerations is as essential as our energy considerations. Continued research, public programs, public and professional education, and collaboration between medical and nutritional scientists will only be harmed by this move.

One can imagine the expedient reasons and the political pressures that would lead you to this step. If all down the line agricultural policy goes back to supporting practices that lead to the major burden of disease on the American economy, these moves will be shortsighted indeed.

I would like to ask you to reconsider this decision and be kind enough to explain to me, as a representative of the public health community, the reasons for it.

Sincerely,

*Henry Blackburn / jml*  
Henry Blackburn, M.D.  
Professor and Director

HB:jml

cc: Senator Durenberger ✓  
Senator Boschwitz ✓  
Congressman Sabo ✓

bpc: J. Stampler ✓

Enclosures