



UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA
TWIN CITIES

Laboratory of Physiological Hygiene
School of Public Health
Stadium Gate 27
611 Beacon Street S.E.
Minneapolis, Minnesota 55455

FILE - STAMLER

November 19, 1981

Jeremiah Stamler, M.D.
Professor and Chairman
Northwestern University
Department of Community Health
and Preventive Medicine
Room 1-615, Morton Building
310 E. Superior Street
Chicago, IL 60611

Dear Jerry:

I've been called back for a meeting with my dean concerning the acute financial situation at the School of Public Health, and cancelled going to New York for the National Conference on Smoking. I talked to John Pinney and reiterated to him the strong policy stand being taken by the American Heart Association and its firm decision to back, over the long haul, a grass roots support for the Waxman-type legislation. He indicated that he felt that the American Heart and American Lung stands were strong and was happy for that. He informed me that Ernst Wynder had been named Chairman of "the working group on the changing cigarette," in which I was to participate. This is an obvious political situation in support of the concept of the changing cigarette by ACS.

I indicated to him verbally and in writing that the Epidemiology Council's policy was on the long-standing recommendations, including the Inter-society Report, for gradual steps leading toward the elimination of the tobacco industry. The public health message and strategy was to help people quit and to work toward the prevention of smoking.

Pinney is now "free to lobby" on this issue and feels a strong need for the heaviest voluntary agency support for these matters. He feels that the suggestion of the FDA taking over tobacco would probably not help the issue. A policy statement by John Holbrook of "the safe cigarette" along with the review of evidence and a reiteration of Julius Richmond's summary which cautions about any conclusions of reduced risk. He analyzes public misperceptions about low tar and nicotine cigarettes.

Cordially,

Henry Blackburn, M.D.
Professor and Director

HB/pm



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CONGRES - STAMLER

February 19, 1981

Jeremiah Stamler, M.D.
Professor and Chairman
Department of Community Health
and Preventive Medicine
Room 9-105 Ward Building
Northwestern University-Medical School
303 East Chicago Avenue
Chicago, IL. 60611

Dear Friend:

I will be calling in a week or so concerning the things that you would like to talk about in our panel on the decline of coronary heart disease at the American College of Cardiology Meeting in San Francisco next month. I want you to talk about your direct experience, and things you want to talk about. I think our informal presentations should be very short, on the order of five minutes or so, to leave room for discussion.

We have been invited to contribute on this subject to a special issue of Cardiology, the publication that is under the editorship of Jan Kellermann. I certainly don't want to impose manuscripts on my colleagues; however, if you have something to say, and have the material at hand, it would be nice to have a thoughtful discussion of this in one place as a logical sequel now--a couple of years after the Decline Conference.

On the other hand, I need your opinion whether there are significant new developments since that Congress that are worthwhile assembling. Certainly it would be useful to present it before the practicing profession, but that could be done in an editorial.

May I welcome your response, then, to the idea of assembling papers on the various aspects of the decline of coronary mortality, including design of explanatory studies.

Cordially,

Henry Blackburn, M.D.
Professor and Director

HB:jml



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COPIES - STAMLER

July 14, 1981

Dr. and Mrs. Jeremiah Stamler
84060 Pioppi
Salerno,
ITALY

Dear Jerry and Rose:

Nelly and I had a delightful visit with family in Florence. My first experience with "nobility." We stayed in the sober city castle of Nelly's aunt and toured all the back streets, byways, and museums of Florence, eating in pleasant small restaurants. I strongly recommend to you the Museum of the History of Science if you are ever in the area. It is worth a full day. Most of the implements and early development of astronomy, cartography, studies of gravity, electricity, and mechanics are there!

Then we visited the country estate of the aunt, an active, working farm of olives, grapes, and fruit, but, of course, it was the busy season only for fruit. It is an unbelievable life, which, of course, is on its last legs. They suspect it is the last generation before their country estate, a former hunting lodge of one of the Medicis, will be turned over to the state. Her son is operating it with reasonable success, but it is unlikely to go any further in the family.

Then we visited Nelly's uncle, who has already given up their paternal country estate because of the cost of labor and the communization of their peasants. But he remodeled one of his peasant's cottages, five hundred yards down the hill from the villa, and it is a charming retreat with a view of the Tuscany hills with just enough olive trees, 400, to keep the sons busy part of the year and to help with their schooling.

It is a dying lifestyle, but it was most amusing for us to glimpse a piece of it before it's gone. Nelly's uncle had just finished his only scholarly activity, a five year project in publication of a beautiful book on the art, the tactics, the instruments, and the topography of wild boar hunting! It is a beautiful piece and obviously has little competition in the field.

We were able, more or less, to maintain the rhythm acquired at your place, early morning working, walking, museum hopping, climbing towers, a nice lunch and a nice nap, afternoons in the country, evenings at restaurants, and relatively early to bed. I suspect that I will be caught napping the rest of the summer, at least in the early afternoons.

July 14, 1981
Stamler Letter
Page Two

It was marvelous to observe your Minnelea lifestyle, and we are most grateful for the hospitality and delightful company. I left Nelly in the station in Florence waiting for her mother, who was to arrive on the train shortly after my departure. They will have another week in Florence, a couple of weeks in Corfu, and a couple of weeks in their home town in southern France before the summer is over.

I will have a week to ten days with Mac Smith and other friends in the Bohemian Redwood Grove in northern California, partly with his camp of journalists and partly with the camp band, probably performing daily. I'll then have a week with the U.S. Seminar in Tahoe, where I am now more formally involved with a series of talks on the epidemiology of coronary heart disease. We are proud of the U.S. Seminar (as you of the international one).

You might want to keep in mind that my almost total absence from the international scene since my sabbatical in 1971 (with the exception of the one invitation to the World Congress in Japan), has been appropriate to my needs to concentrate on the rebuilding of the Laboratory. However, if now I could be useful in any way in complementing your international function in any continuing role to strengthen the U.S. contribution (as your international role changes), you can keep in mind that I am slightly more available and interested.

For your personal information, I've decided that it is not possible to involve Ancel Keys in any reasonable collegial collaboration with an editorial group to continue productivity in the Seven Countries (as you have done so well with CDP and other studies). Rather than battle the issue, I am encouraging independent submissions from Kromhout and Menotti on the dietary issue with minimal involvement of the Laboratory. It is really too bad that the Laboratory cannot participate more actively, but I insist that it be a democratic organization and that appears to be impossible. On the other hand, we will maintain an editorial hand in anything that comes out of the study and would appreciate your cooperation and awareness that we are insisting, at least, on this role.

I am also making a conscious effort to avoid further criticism and confrontation with Ancel. I apparently can't do it in a way which is productive, although I feel that I am the only one of his friends and colleagues that lets him know of larger concerns. I know that many colleagues, including Menotti, the Finns, the Japanese, the Yugoslavians, and others have been severely disappointed and disillusioned with some of his efforts, approaches, and writings. If there is ever the opportunity on your part to influence him, I think I have boiled down the two critical issues for me to the following: when he writes representing the Seven Countries Group, he maintains a very personal "bullish" style. I feel that this is inappropriate to a collaborative publication and that he should reserve that personal and highly identifiable style to editorials and single-authored presentations. Publications from the group as a whole should be dispassionate and represent the best of his writing skills, and the absolute minimum of his opinions and emotional words. Secondly, it seems to me that where we have particularly come into conflict is an issue on which I would

July 14, 1981
Stamler Letter
Page Three

invite your comment and help. As far as I can see in reviewing his writings, he has rarely if ever made a real public health recommendation. His recommendations apply to the individual practice of prevention. For example: "it is better to be near the mean than at the extremes of weight," and "there appears to be little advantage in lowering cholesterol levels below 225." This is direct, individual counsel; it does not take into consideration the desirable changes in means and distributions of populations; it doesn't recognize the significant need for and contribution of weight control for the control of other risk characteristics in high risk cultures.

Any discreet, indirect influence you can have on these two sources of severe annoyance between his colleagues (mainly me) would be useful over the long run. I will probably not attempt any more direct confrontations as I can't do them in a way that he can accept.

Finally, I should be happy to have a copy of your letter to Scott Grundy, which would help me in bringing the report to a new edition ready for the Scientific Councils. In addition, a copy of your comments on the Diet in Childhood Statement would be useful. Meanwhile, I will keep you in contact with revisions which come my way. August 10th is the date of the meeting to consider the Diet in Childhood Statement in Dallas.

Again, Nelly and I are most grateful for our restful and charming week with you in Pioppi and wish you a continued pleasant season and a good time at the next seminar.

Regards and Thanks,

Henry Blackburn, M.D.
Professor and Director

HB:jml



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file: Stamler

October 19, 1981

Jeremiah Stamler, M.D.
Professor and Chairman
Northwestern University
Department of Community Health
and Preventive Medicine
Room 1-615, Morton Building
310 East Superior St.
Chicago, IL 60611

Dear Jerry:

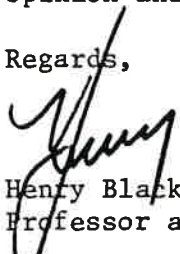
Many thanks for Volume I of the Working Group Report on Arteriosclerosis, and for your June 1981 draft of an article on primary prevention which I assume is to go in your book with Norm Kaplan? It is a very useful compendium and statement. I am interested that you omitted your own demonstration projects as well as the Karelia and Stanford first generation projects. Would it not make a useful transitional paragraph between primary prevention interventions and public policy on page 81? It is true there is not much that can be said except that the integrated strategies appear feasible and appear to result in significant change in health behavior and probably in community risk factor levels.

I am a bit puzzled by your strong stroking of Mary Lasker, "whose name looms large." Your analysis is, of course, more informed than mine, but I would imagine the balance would be about 99 to 1 in terms of her encouragement of high technology-related care and research versus prevention.

It is a little puzzling to see the early role Fred Stare played and to see his significant negative influence the last ten or fifteen years. One wonders where and why he went off the track, sort of like our old friend Gunnar Biörck, strongly involved at the outset and very quickly cynical and disinvolved.

I was a mite disappointed that you didn't feel it useful to show the illustrations on suggested, ideal, desirable and existing serum cholesterol levels from the American Health Foundation document. I have been rather disappointed not to see our colleagues take up on it as a powerful argument due to the congruence of opinion and as a useful guideline for population distributions.

Regards,


Henry Blackburn, M.D.
Professor and Director

HB:lr

enclosures

1- Oct. 16 letter to Ancel Keys from HB
2- PC of p. 1192 of last ms.
3- main table from AK's article "Cancer Mortality + Low Cholesterol"



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file - Stamler

October 20, 1981

Jeremiah Stamler, M.D.
Professor and Chairman
Northwestern University
Department of Community Health
and Preventive Medicine
Room 1-615, Morton Building
310 East Superior St.
Chicago, IL 60611

Dear Jerry:

In the term used by Science magazine, Ancel continues his "blustery" language, in the name of all his colleagues. He really doesn't get the message. I'm the only one who apparently has the guts to point it out to him, much to the deterioration of our relationship. Nevertheless, I hope the substance and wording of this letter is appropriate and is as unprovocative as any questioning of "the chief" can be. I also believe he should consider interactions, including BMI.

Cordially,

Henry Blackburn, M.D.
Professor and Director

HB:lr

enclosures

- oct 16 letter to Ancel Keys
- pc of 1-1192 of last ms.
- main title from Keys article
"Cancer Mortality & Low Cholesterol"