



American United Life Insurance Company

Post Office Box 368

Indianapolis, Indiana 46206

Telephone (Area Code 317) 263-1877

March 12, 1986

Dr. Henry Blackburn,
Chief Medical Consultant
Mutual Service Life Insurance Co.
P.O. Box 64035
St. Paul, Minnesota 55164-0035

Reply on tape

Dear Henry,

How are you?

Years ago I read some of your original investigative successes in relating the high Coronary Artery Diseases in Finns to the heavily fatty diet enjoyed by these folks.

I don't think you said it but somehow I assumed their fatty diet was a fat fishy composite. Wrong?

The reason I'm now asking you about this is because of the salutary compliments being published about Omega-3 and how fish oils are good for you. They even unstick platelets! I even hear its safe to eat fatty fish, shrimp and lobster.

Now for a guy who has been indoctrinated to believe "IF IT TASTES GOOD - DON'T EAT IT, ITS BAD FOR YOU", all of this comes as a shock. What's the real truth, Henry?

What foods cause the Finn's lipedemia?

Do you agree with the Omega 3 plaudits?

Hungrily,

Doc

M. E. Rougraff, M.D.
Vice President &
Medical Director

P.S. I'm getting old. Son Bruce graduates from I.U. Med. School in May. Our caboose, Paul, is a Junior in college. The nest is emptying out!

MER:mr

Rougraff



UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA
TWIN CITIES

Division of Epidemiology
School of Public Health
Stadium Gate 27
611 Beacon Street S.E.
Minneapolis, Minnesota 55455
(612) 376-4056

March 21, 1986

M.E. Rougraff, M.D.
Vice President and Medical Director
American United Life Insurance Company
P.O. Box 368
Indianapolis, IN 46206

Dear Doc:

Thank you for your friendly letter and for your notes along the way about our colleagues and your business and your thinking. I am very grateful for it, as I'm pretty much out of touch.

You assumed wrongly that the Finnish diet was high in fat or that the fat composition was due to fish. The source of Finnish fat is primarily butter fat, cheese and lard. They have one of the higher saturated fat intakes in the world associated with mythology about what makes a man a man and with very practical considerations of having to work 5-7000 calories worth a day outdoors lumbering in cold weather. So, the saturated fat hypothesis is still riding very strong. There is contended evidence, as there was in Seven Countries Study, that a relatively high fat diet is compatible with no coronary disease if the saturated fat is low. The classical experiment in that is the Greek islands that get 20-30% of their calories from olive oil.

I agree with the healthful values of fish and am delighted that some of the mechanisms or the healthy aspects of fish eating, which is a staple part of the Mediterranean and Oriental diets that are clearly healthy in regard to cancer and cardiovascular disease risk, are being worked out.

The epidemiology isn't all that strong yet, but the mechanisms in regard to the blood lipoprotein response and platelet stickiness with the N-3 fatty acids is certainly a plausible mechanism.

I can't imagine your feeling old under any circumstances or feeling old because you have a junior in college. You make me seem positively antique. My youngest daughter, age 30, is living on the third floor of my house in a private apartment and in the second year of her practice of veterinary medicine, and that's my youngest. But I stay young with a lovely 31 year old companion. My wife of 33 years and I are divorced and she is happily

M.E. Rougraff, M.D.

Page 2

remarried with somebody that's much more suited to her needs, and I am enjoying life, still administering a huge division, far too big for my talents, containing over 500 employees, and I have a few activities on the musical circuit. I'll take the Preservation Hall Band to the National Academy of Sciences next month. I look forward to these artistic interludes. It's fun to be able to make people smile with music, as I don't make them smile everyday at work.

It was good to hear from you. With your emptying nest, I hope you'll take care of mother robin.

Cordially,

Henry Blackburn

Henry Blackburn, M.D. (st)
Professor and Director

HB:st

Enclosures: *23PM ad, Lolisk Mail, Bentel Antiquated*

Dictated, but not seen by Dr. Blackburn