

## PERSONAL AND CONFIDENTIAL

November 12, 1993

Dear Russ:

RE: Faculty Retreat

I am sorry to miss the December faculty retreat. I will be on a retreat of my own, and writing like crazy. Just a few comments and ideas as you approach the retreat.

The School of Public Health Strategic Planning personal interview seemed worthwhile. But the subsequent questionnaire was horrifying. Its wording is guaranteed to pit the non-research people and sentiment against research; a terrible questionnaire! The issue should be raised at the next SPH faculty meeting as well as in our own faculty meeting. The object of planning is to recognize our opportunities and strengths in all areas, and not to cast one element in the school against the other. We need inducements both to good teachers and to good researchers. We need more understanding, tolerance and support among them for each other. If this Strategic Planning process results in greater polarization in the School between those emphasizing service versus teaching versus research, then it will have been a negative effort. A voice of protest should be raised on the way the issues are being decided by bad questionnaires and anonymous tallies.

Since we now have no School dean to bring us together, we need now, again, strong Division Heads to raise the issues and to indicate clearly that they are working together for the good of the School. I think it is a critical time again for the Division Heads to meet socially and talk and come together, representing the excellence strength, and enterprise in this institution, since we seem to be plagued by an administrative dean alternating with "hot shot" deans having their own agendas.

With regard to our Division, I have only one overriding and very personal comment which I hope you will accept in the good spirit intended. My

feelings were spared by people for years who probably didn't have the courage to tell me when I was too preoccupied with activities outside the major interests of the Division. Somebody has to have the courage to ask you now, and pointedly, whether your long-term goals and future satisfactions will lie more in the success of the Division and the institution, or in recognition and participation at so-called "higher levels" in the community. At the moment, I see these in serious conflict, and in many situations it seems that you make choices which basically subtract from the total energies applied to the success of the Division and add to the energies applied to your personal development (recognizing they sometimes go together). I say this with admiration and acknowledgement that you are more energetic and ambitious and competent than I in putting all of many issues together and staying in good contact. On the other hand, I suspect that my observation is true, and believe that the Division is in grave danger during these most difficult times when real focus, thinking, planning and talking are required. I wonder if it would be useful for you to do as they say in the old blues song, "count the days I'm gone" and after that, add on the days of preparation and recovery and see how much energy is left for the ideation about, as well as administration of the Division. Certainly the depth of your commitment to the Division is not in question. I would not compare you at all to a Kane or a Joseph who clearly used a good institution to feather their nests. But I simply raise the question and suggest that the result could be the same, that is, the end result of an unintentional frittering of energy and diffusion of focus away from the Division's primary needs, having the same outcome as an intentional effort.

Secondly, in regard to the ideas, the ideals, the mission, the atmosphere, the identify of the Division, we are larger in some respects now than when I was Director and are even more diverse. This means that a great increase in thinking is needed to be sure that we move with this diversity and that it doesn't tear us apart. It seems to me that we have in the past had a national and international image which was close to the image we had of ourselves. I think both images are much more diffused now. I guess I also think the Division needs an emphasis, and my idea about that emphasis, though it is too broad and vague at this point, is that it be on prevention of high risk in the first place. This might well be a flag of identity and embrace effectively all our skills in behavioral, institutional and community intervention, interventions in school-age and youth, interventions in nutrition and in infectious disease-related behaviors, etc.

Though new initiatives, such as medical care and outcomes, are appealing and topical, and surveys and screening and chronic disease prevention are needed and topical, the creativity, identify and leadership are needed now in primordial prevention.

Third, I would leap at the opportunity raised by the School planning process to establish a "five-year evaluation plan" for faculty as a replacement for tenure and find out how realistic this is and think hard about this as a mechanism for getting people up (and getting other people out). I would also use this opportunity to make sure that there are built-in inducements for productive research and productive teaching. Our Division needs and desires are much more likely to be met in the current context of a demonstrated urgent and broader need in the whole School.

Fourth, as I have repeatedly mentioned, I would be darned sure that Dean Surbey is happy and that his needs and ambitions are met. You obviously will be a much more burdened person if you lose him. Similarly, he will continue to be a much over-burdened person if he doesn't get a strong colleague and counterpart.

*fun*, Finally, I speak to the issue of creativity, challenge, discourse, and intellectual "form". We have some good people. Let's keep them creative. For the less creative people, let's inspire them, encourage them to move along, or to move elsewhere. I have the feeling that rather overly critical and, at best, conservative and dull and neutral people are assuming more power in the Division. "We wouldn't be where we are today" (excuse the British humor) if we weren't risk takers. We have too many nay sayers and sourpusses and navel gazers. This leaves it mainly to you to take the chances. As you know, for example, I was particularly annoyed how Aaron Folsom frankly insulted Pam Clark. I think we would have been a more creative place if we had taken a chance on Pam. I boil particularly when I think how I was the only one really willing and anxious to take a chance on Aaron when he appeared here!

Have a good Retreat. I hope you know that my best wishes are with you in what amounts to a new strategic planning process for the Division, and that I admire your leadership. I fret only to myself! (I have spoken about none of these issues with anyone else, though I may do so with issues other than the personal comments which will, of course, remain between

US.

For myself, I feel comfortable going on this two-month leave since it's combined earned vacation and unpaid leave. I am anxious to see whether I really can put something together on the History of the AHA Council. What little strength I have in this history area has to do with telling stories and recounting ideas. I think if I can make it a history of ideas rather than a chronology of events I can get something useful done, letting somebody else straighten up my facts. I am afraid of bogging down in the chronology of events rather than showing the spread of ideas. For your information, Kathy and Surbey are exploring other options for my stepping out gradually than the Sabbatical, in case that doesn't work out (at full pay, etc.).