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Reply on paper

HENRY
Dear Dr. Blackburn:

I have not seen you since you site-visited my laboratory at the University of California, San Diego (UCSD) Lipid Research Clinic (LRC) some years ago. After your visit, I continued my participation in the UCSD Lipid Research Clinic program as Laboratory Director, Clinic Physician in the Coronary Primary Prevention Trial (CPPT) and for a short period as Acting Director. As the CPPT wound down, I felt the need to up-date my clinical skills and did so as a Fellow in Clinical Cardiology at UCSD for two years. After that rather demanding exercise, I took a year off and travelled abroad: Kenya, Tanzania (successfully reaching the summit of 19,340 foot Mount Kilimanjaro but did not see Hemingway's vaunted tiger), South Africa, Sri Lanka, India, Australia, and New Zealand. Since my return, I have given careful consideration to the different career choices that face me. The course that most appeals to me would be to search for a position that would require and utilize all the different facets of my previous training and experience, namely, clinical cardiology, academic medicine, administration, education, collaborative studies, experience at both the national and international levels, foreign languages, etc. My preference would be to explore opportunities abroad at the international level, e.g., the World Health Organization or some such similar position. Because of your extensive international experience and contacts, I reasoned that if anyone might know of these types of opportunities, you would be the person. So, I am writing you for counsel, advice and assistance as to how I might find such a position. With good fortune, you may even know of an opening of this type. If not, I would greatly appreciate it if you would make a few contacts on my behalf to see if this type of "ideal" post (as I visualize it) exists and might be available.

I enclose my curriculum vitae. As you know, in addition to my training in clinical cardiology at Harvard in the late 1950's and again in the 1980's at UCSD, I spent four years in the Office of the Director at the National Heart Institute with Jim Watt, Ralph Knutti and Bill Zukel. Whilst there, one of my responsibilities was to participate with Bob Wilkins and Jerry Stamler in developing the protocol for the Coronary Drug Project and to help shepherd the final grant application for this national collaborative study through the National Advisory Heart Council. During my last year at the National Heart Institute, I functioned as Staff Associate under Abe Lillienfeld on the President's Commission on Heart Disease, Cancer and Stroke. Among other things I did when with the Commission was to write source papers for both the Subcommittee on Heart Disease and the Subcommittee on Research (see Bibliography). I have been in academic medicine ever since, first at Baylor College of Medicine in Houston and subsequently at UCSD. While at Baylor, I put together the scientific part of Dr. DeBakey's \$ 12 million Program Project grant in 1966 (subsequently funded). I particularly enjoyed the role of "compleat" physician required in academic life with activities spread amongst research, teaching and patient care.

I have been very fortunate in my life to have travelled abroad rather extensively, both academically and privately. In 1960, Paul White invited me to accompany him, Ancel Keys, Mike DeBakey and Luther Terry to Roumania and Bulgaria and to the Third World Congress of Cardiology in Rome. Subsequently, in 1961, I accompanied Dr. White, Irv Page Alfred Blalock and others to the USSR for a Joint Scientific Conference in Cardiology in Moscow (Leningrad, Kiev, Tbilisi). In the Fall of 1961, I was a member of the official U.S. Delegation on Medical Ecology (Bill Zukel and others) to the USSR with on-site visits to medical institutions in Moscow, Kiev, Tbilisi, Uzbekistan (Samarkand, Tashkent), Kazakhstan (Alma-Ata) and Siberia (Irkutsk on Lake Baikal). I used to be rather fluent in French and Russian.

I am hopeful that you will be able to advise and assist me regarding avenues I might explore in my search for this sort of "ideal" position that I have described, if such exists. The type of position is most important, salary is secondary. I would be greatly indebted to you for any help you might give me. Looking forward to hearing from you, I send my warmest personal regards.

Sincerely,

JOHN

John D. Turner, M.D.
Associate Clinical Professor



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Dear John:

How delightful to hear from you and to get a rundown of your fascinating career and contributions. The post to head cardiovascular diseases at Geneva in WHO has just closed. There has always been a problem getting an American appointed but I would have been happy to nominate you to the Director General.

The Copenhagen office of WHO, in other words, the European division, has always been more action oriented than Geneva and I will send something along to them though I'm not sure the status of that office right now in cardiovascular diseases. That's where Pisa got his effective start.

Considering your interests, I wonder if you might not want to think of one of those Robert Wood Johnson's, Washington Policy Fellowships to get you back in the Washington scene. You're also sufficiently youthful that a Division or Branch Head at NIH would be within reason and you ought to send a note to our colleagues there; somebody at the level of Bill Harlan or Bill Friedewald or Basil Rifkin. A call to Bill Harlan might also be useful as he spent a substantial period of time with the World Bank in health related projects, mainly in Africa. He is closer to the political scene in health than I.

Here, I have gradually cut back wide-ranging activities to focus on the needs of an extremely large and complex Division of Epidemiology. We

dropped the Physiological Hygiene name and status in 1983 and are now a fully "balanced" division, with large concentrations of effort in the epidemiology of cardiovascular diseases, cancer, health behavior and infectious disease.

It occurs to me that one of the greatest gadabouts and best informed people on the international scene is Richard Hurley of the American Heart Association and it would be worth giving him a call or sending him a note similar to the one you wrote me. You would obviously be a logical successor to him but he would also be aware of existing international offices.

I'm sure you have considered going "the industry way", W. McFate-Smith in San Francisco could tell you what's going on in that area. His couple of years experience with MSD was not all that happy but it still might be worth a call. Obviously Ted Cooper and Bob Levy are both well placed to inform you about industry on the national and international scene. Your clinical trials experience, I would think, would be appealing for a vice-presidential appointment.

And then it seems to me that the Bush administration would be very fortunate to have you. A call to Michael McGinnis might clue you into what's going on in the Department of HHS.

It was a delight to hear from you and it would be nice to welcome you back to the fold in preventive cardiology at the 2nd International Congress of Preventive Cardiology June 17-22 at the Washington Hilton next year. Think about it.

Finally, have you ever thought of being a Dean?

Cordially,



Henry Blackburn, MD
Professor and Director

/tmw