



N3-372-33



274082

15.04.03

DGO DGI NHD

April 14, 2003

5 Pages Delivered Via Facsimile 011-41-22-791-3111

Gro Harlem Brundtland, MD, MPH
 Director General
 World Health Organization
 Avenue Appia 20
 1211 Geneva 27
 Switzerland

Dear Dr. Brundtland:

Attached is a copy of a letter signed by two U.S. Senators. This letter speaks for itself.

We will exercise every avenue available to expose the dubious nature of the "Diet, Nutrition and The Prevention of Chronic Diseases" Report, including asking Congressional appropriators to challenge future funding of the U.S.'s \$406 million contributions (including both regular and voluntary funding) to the WHO. Taxpayers' dollars should not be used to support misguided, non-science-based reports which do not add to the health and well being of Americans, much less the rest of the world. If necessary, we will promote and encourage new laws which require future WHO funding to be provided only if the WHO organization accepts that all reports must be supported by the preponderance of science; be subjected to a broad external peer-review process; complete an economic analysis of what effect any such report will have on the 192 member countries; and be allowed full due process including WHO Executive Board endorsement and World Health Assembly approval. These same funding considerations also will be directed at FAO.

As mentioned before, we believe this report drafted by a select group of experts should not become an official WHO or FAO Report. It does not encompass the preponderance of science as cited in previous correspondences on March 14 and April 7. It does not include key studies which substantially refute the WHO Report findings.

The "Advance Final Draft Copy" has not undergone due process involving the Executive Board endorsement, much less approval by the World Health Assembly. Also, there has been no broad-based, external peer-review process to substantiate the group of experts' consensus interpretation. The Report's credibility, as well as the integrity of WHO and FAO, are at stake.

Be Sure It's Sugar: The Natural Sweetener... 15 Calories Per Teaspoon!™

Unfounded and misleading recommendations of this nature can have profound impact on hard working sugar growers and their families, particularly in developing countries that are the primary audiences for WHO programs. Entire industries can be put at risk as well as local, national and international economies. Consider developing nations where sugar industries play an even more critical role in economic development including contributions to education, health and welfare, a clean water supply as well as electrical energy and employment. Before the Advance Final Draft Copy becomes an official WHO/FAO Report, an economic analysis must be completed, taking into consideration the hardship it will impose on all member countries.

We reiterate our requests previously made in letters to you including: **1) have the report removed immediately from the WHO and FAO websites; 2) contact FAO Director-General Dr. Jacques Diouf and request that the planned roll-out on April 23 in Rome be cancelled; and 3) request that any further "draft reports" not be released or publicized until a complete review of the underlying science has taken place by a broad-based, external peer group; an economic analysis has been completed; and the WHO Executive Board endorsement with World Health Assembly approval has occurred.**

Finally, I would respectfully request that we be allowed reasonable time on the agenda for the May 29-30 Executive Board meeting in Geneva to personally clarify our position and reiterate our points made above. Your consideration of this request is appreciated.

Thank you.

Sincerely,



Andrew C. Briscoe III
President and CEO

cc: The World Health Organization Executive Board
Dr. Jacques Diouf, Director General, Food and Agriculture Organization of the U.N.
Jong Wook Lee, South Korea, Director General Elect, World Health Organization
World Health Organization Regional Office for the Americas, Washington, DC
John D. Negroponte, United States Ambassador to the United Nations
Riaz Khan, PhD, Director General, The World Sugar Research Organization, Ltd.
Graham Somerville, Comité Européen des Fabricants de Sucre (CEFS)

Attachment: March 28, 2003 Letter from Senators Craig and Breaux

United States Senate
WASHINGTON, DC 20510

March 28, 2003

The Honorable Tommy G. Thompson
Secretary, U.S. Department of Health and Human Services
Hubert H. Humphrey Building
200 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20201

The Honorable Ann M. Veneman
Secretary, U.S. Department of Agriculture
1400 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20250

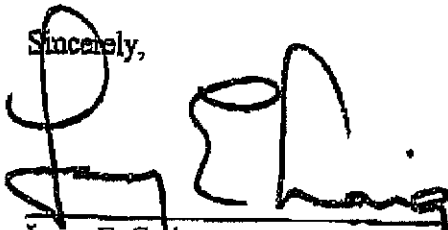
Dear Secretary Thompson and Secretary Veneman:

You recently were sent a letter from a wide range of organizations representing U.S. sugar and corn sweetener producers, as well as sweetener-using food manufacturers, who are greatly concerned about release of a report in early March by the World Health Organization and the U.N.'s Food and Agriculture Organization that contains misleading information regarding health risks associated with consumption of added sugars in excess of ten percent of an individual's daily caloric intake. A copy of the sweetener food coalition's letter to you, sent March 20, 2003, is enclosed for your reference.

As co-chairs of the U.S. Senate Sweetener Caucus, we are writing to urge your prompt and favorable attention to the issues raised by these food and commodity organizations. Specifically, we urge you to call upon the WHO and FAO to cease further promotion of the joint report entitled, "WHO Technical Report Series 916 Diet, Nutrition and The Prevention of Chronic Diseases," which currently is in advance final draft form. There is sufficient reason to believe the findings and recommendations in this report have not withstood the rigorous scientific review appropriate to the normal standards of these distinguished international institutions.

Please keep us advised of your response to the sweetener producing and food processing coalition's request for your urgent attention to this matter.

Sincerely,



Larry E. Craig
United States Senator



John Breaux
United States Senator

March 20, 2003

Delivered Via Facsimile 202-690-7203
3 Pages Total
Original - Hand Delivered

The Honorable Tommy G. Thompson
Secretary of Department of Health and Human Services
Hubert H. Humphrey Building
200 Independence Avenue, SW
Washington, DC 20201

Dear Mr. Secretary:

As you may know, on March 3, 2003, a group of selected scientists operating jointly with the World Health Organization (WHO) and Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) of the United Nations (UN) prematurely released an "Advance Final Draft Copy" of a report titled "WHO Technical Report Series 916 Diet, Nutrition and The Prevention of Chronic Diseases." This unofficial report was announced in an official WHO press statement and was posted on the WHO website, accompanied by an inconspicuous disclaimer of authority stating:

This report contains the collective views of an international group of experts and does not represent the decisions or the stated policy of the World Health Organization or of the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) of the United Nations.

These "collective views" were widely reported as an "official" WHO recommendation by the press, misleading the public to believe there is a health risk in consuming more than 10% of an individual's daily caloric intake from added sugars. This recommendation is flawed and without support by the preponderance of peer-reviewed science. We believe the WHO and FAO have an obligation as respected organizations to follow proper scientific protocol and promote true science-based recommendations.

The group of experts' failure to follow internationally accepted standards for external peer review prior to publication not only raises questions regarding the scientific standing of the experts' conclusions, but challenges the report's legitimacy as well. Of hundreds of studies available regarding sugars, only eleven citations were credited by the experts to support their "view." One of the eleven is an antiquated 1970 citation. Just last September 2002, our own National Institute of Medicine (IOM) released a report in which 279 published studies were reviewed for the chapter on dietary sugars and starches. The IOM review showed that diet quality is unaffected until the intake of added sugars exceeds 25 % of daily calories. It is important to note, the IOM report was not even acknowledged in the WHO report.

We also are concerned with the group of experts' reasons for widely reporting their "views" before subjecting them to external scientific review. Furthermore, the group of experts' "views" were posted on the WHO website, encouraging the public and press to assume it was based on the totality of scientific evidence and accepted by the WHO Executive Board. In fact, it was not even reviewed or approved by the WHO Executive Board.

Studies indicate that physical activity plays an important role in the fight against obesity. However, there was limited reference to the benefits regarding the essential role of physical activity in reducing the onset and severity of obesity.

While we applaud WHO and FAO in their concern regarding the obesity crisis, well intended but unfounded recommendations of this nature confuse the public, mislead the press and generally forestall the science-based solutions we all seek. They also place the credibility of both WHO and FAO in jeopardy, thereby reducing public confidence and trust in both organizations.

Furthermore, misguided attempts to address a serious problem can put entire industries at risk as well as local economies and their communities. Consideration should be given to developing nations whose farming and food industries play an even more critical role in economic development including employment and contributions to education, health and welfare, clean water supply, and inexpensive energy.

Mr. Secretary, your personal intervention in this circumstance will be greatly appreciated. If no action is taken, the draft of this misguided recommendation becomes an official WHO policy when it is officially rolled-out in Rome by WHO and FAO on April 23, 2003. Therefore, time is of the essence in responding.

We urge you to contact the WHO Director General Dr. Gro Harlem Brundtland, incoming WHO Director General Dr. Jong-Wook Lee, and FAO Director-General Dr. Jacques Diouf and request that the "Advance Final Draft Copy" be removed from the WHO website and no further publicity occur, including cancellation of the April 23 joint roll-out, until a complete review of the underlying science has taken place by a broad-based, external peer group and the WHO Executive Board has approved the document.

Such actions and steps will help prevent further confusion among American consumers about nutrition and will serve to reinforce what the administration has embraced – a strong, science-based nutrition and physical fitness policy contributing to healthy lifestyles.

Sincerely,

Corn Refiners Association
International Dairy Foods Association
National Corn Growers Association
Snack Food Association
The Sugar Association
Wheat Foods Council
U.S. Council for International Business