

September 4, 1991

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William L. Roper, M.D., M.P.H.  
Director  
Centers for Disease Control  
Atlanta, GA 30333

Dear Mr. Roper:

You have disseminated in widely published bulletins, memoranda and interviews, the misinformation that malariatherapy for neurosyphilis was "variable and unpredictable," and that "therapeutic trials were not carried out following strict scientific guidelines." As yet you have presented no scientific data to support your claims. Based on that unsubstantial premise, you reject the concept of malariatherapy for Lyme disease, which I published in the New England Journal of Medicine, April 20, 1990.

I have provided you with extensive scientific data, including a 1984 publication from the Harvard School of Public Health, supported by the U.S. Public Health Service, containing 69 references proving that malariatherapy was safe and effective for neurosyphilis. Included were publications from the NIH, of the U.S. Public Health Service, stating that agency provided malarial blood for inducing malariatherapy in tens of thousands of neurosyphilitics from 1931 to 1965. Antibiotics were available for the last 20 of those years but were ineffective in large numbers of neurosyphilitic patients, as is true for Lyme disease. Malariatherapy was discontinued when neurosyphilis was wiped out.

You are thereby charging the U.S. Public Health Service, parent organization for the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), and the NIH of deliberately treating tens of thousands of Americans over more than 30 years with a method that you claim is variable, unpredictable, unproven, and dangerous.

You are aware that under the directorship of your immediate predecessor, Dr. James O. Mason, now Assistant Secretary for Health for the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS), the CDC Department of Malariology in 1986-1987 wrote to me on several occasions offering to provide me with malaria and the technology to use it for injection into cancer patients. Your charges against the U.S. Public Health Services apparently include this action taken under Dr. Mason's administration in regard to malariatherapy.

Additionally, you persist in warning of the danger of inducing hepatitis and AIDS by injecting blood for malariatherapy. You ignore Dr. Mason's announcement on December 5, 1990, that with present screening methods our blood supply is safer than in

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Humanity  
Through  
Health  
and  
Peace

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all the history of transfusion, and that it is safe to transfuse Haitian and African donated blood. Do you challenge that determination of the Department of HHS?

You deny, contrary to all known scientific data, a potential therapy for thousands of Americans suffering chronic Lyme disease. Patients proven to have chronic disabling Lyme disease, who received malariatherapy, have had partial or complete recovery, relieving their disabilities and pain, after the failure of lengthy, expensive courses of antibiotics. Yet you offer no other therapy for these patients.

You are certainly aware that last year in the United States there were about 8,000 new cases of Lyme disease. In addition there were increasing numbers of AIDS patients, 50,000 new cases of syphilis, the first measles deaths in twenty years, a vast increase in tuberculosis infection, as well as an influx of malaria and spread of rabies. You are confronted with these epidemics which the Centers for Disease Control is unable to control. It is incomprehensible that you reject out of hand, contrary to all known scientific data, the opportunity to research an established treatment that shows promise of helping victims of at least one of these tragedies.

Sincerely,



Henry J. Heimlich, M.D., Sc.D.  
President

cc: Louis W. Sullivan, M.D., Secretary of Health & Human Svcs  
James O. Mason, M.D., Dr.P.H., Asst. Sec. for Health, HHS  
Charles A. Bowsker, Controller General, Gen. Acctg. Off.  
Members of Congress  
Public health authorities  
Epidemiologists  
Medical writers