

Copies to: Arthur Flemming, Sec. H. & Welfare
Cranberry Growers Association
Judd Milton, KROD local Radio Sta.

Nov. 11, '59

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The Honorable Dwight D. Eisenhower
President of the United States
Washington, D. C.

Dear Mr. President:

If Mr. Arthur Flemming, Secretary of Health and Welfare, doesn't resign of his own free will, I think that you should demand his resignation. How any high official like he is can make such asinine statements (danger of getting cancer if a person eats those cranberries contaminated by a weed killer) and broadcast the statements nationally and thereby practically destroy a major industry and jeopardize the livelihood of the thousands of taxpayers engaged in that industry, -- is beyond my comprehension. Apparently he doesn't have enough common sense to realize that the public is "Cancer touchy" and that it, the public, will refuse to buy a product when it is broadcast as capable of producing cancer immediately or from eating one can of it. Mr. Flemming didn't say that in those words but that's the impression he left on the Cancer-touchy public. Very few people will look at this matter scientifically and judge for themselves whether or not to eat cranberries again; the public in general is gullible and will especially "swallow whole" anything that pours from the mouth of high government officials in Washington.

Why didn't Mr. Flemming handle this matter in the way that the UD of Agriculture or related agencies handle, for example, a carload of wheat found to be contaminated with worms or rat droppings. Such a carload is simply condemned and no great public hell-a-bull-loo is done about it. The public in general never hears about it and goes right on eating their white bread. The public doesn't stop eating white bread or pastries just because an occasional carload of wheat or flour is found to be contaminated. Actually, if Mr. Flemming is so darn afraid that contaminated cranberries are going to cause cancer, why doesn't he do some shouting about the possible cancer-producing aspects of white flour, white sugar, etc.? Is it because he doesn't want to buck "vested interests"? No doubt the small size (by comparison) of the cranberry growers doesn't scare him or curb his desire to "run off at the mouth" with irresponsible statements. It seems that now he is determined to prove(?) he is right by sending out hundreds of UDA chemists etc. to check the crops all over the country; all it will amount to is to amplify the scare and waste a lot of the taxpayers' money. It seems that Mr. Flemming is not only stupid but also stubborn (a corollary of stupidity); I understand from news reports that he is "sticking to his guns" (he should stick-but-good and the gun go off, in my opinion).

I hope that the cranberry growers can arrange to go through with their suit for damages against Mr. Flemming and the Government too. I hate to see tax money wasted but in this case I would be happy to see the cranberry growers win a suit against Mr. Flemming and the Government. If Mr. Flemming would, in this manner, lose his personal bank deposits, then he might realize the terrible consequences of his loose words and the terrible deprivation such words can cause to individuals.

I hope his words will boomerrang and that the public will call his words "hogwash" and go out and buy five times as many cranberries as they ever bought before; that is what I am going to do and that is what Mr. Judd of the local radio station says he is going to do. Mr. President, I hope you "fire" Mr. Flemming.

Sincerely,

SUNDQUIST
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Cranberries