

To: Neil Goldstein  
From: Hillary Johnson  
Three pages, including this one

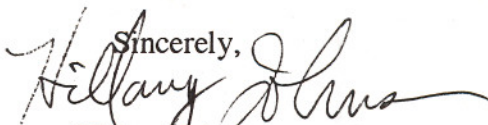
Dear Mr. Goldstein,

April 29, 1996

Please convey my thanks to Congressman Nadler for his interest in my book, *Osler's Web*, its subject matter, and his move to call for a Congressional investigation into the Public Health Service's handling of this epidemic during the previous decade. As my book describes, the Centers for Disease Control and the National Institutes of Health, in effect, have kept the reality of this crippling and infectious disease under wraps for more than twelve years. In the interim, two million Americans, conservatively, have been disabled by CFS---it has been the fastest rising disability claim among private insurers in the last five years, according to the disability insurer with the largest data base on this subject--and the public continues to be misled about the threat.

In 1990, I began to conduct a series of interviews with Dr. Walter Gunn, who was then the principal investigator into CFS at the Centers for Disease Control in Atlanta. Dr. Gunn revealed to me that there was apparent misappropriation of CFS-earmarked funds occurring in Atlanta. His colleagues--scientists and agency administrators--were unimpressed that CFS was a disease requiring aggressive investigation and chose to use at least some of the money for other purposes, in part to beef up their labs with equipment and supplies. When Gunn took his concerns to the second in command at the agency, Dr. Walter Dowdle, the deputy director, he was initially assured there would be an internal investigation and that he, Gunn, would not experience retaliation from his colleagues within the Division of Viral Diseases. In fact, there was no internal investigation, and Gunn did experience a series of retaliations that ultimately drove him into early retirement. When I first met with Gunn, he let me know he was about to take me into his confidence. He said, "I think there should be a congressional investigation into this problem, and I'm hoping you can be instrumental in that."

I would like to offer my support to Congressman Nadler on his proposal for a Congressional investigation. In speaking at book store signings, and at patient conferences in recent days, I have mentioned Nadler's comments on the House floor and there has been a palpable reaction among CFS sufferers and their supporters. There has been, uniformly, a sense of relief that, at last, someone is taking this problem seriously.

Sincerely,  
  
Hillary Johnson