average for alternating pairs is also remarkably close to the ratio of the
control beat. In other words, one of the paired beats is actually greater
than average in its index of performance, and one is less. This observa-
tion in dogs, plus the widely recognized effects of potentionation in the
postextrasystolic beat, make a strong case for potentionation alternating
with deletion as the mechanism of pulsus alternans. This averaging has
some clinical consequences. Paired, pulsed stimulation is no longer
used for increasing cardiac performance, but it should be apparent from
inspection of figures 5 and 6 that the patient does not actually deteriorate
from alternation, although alternation is likely to occur in patients with
compromised myocardium. The alternation is not a dangerous condi-
tion, and a specific intervention is not required to eliminate it, although
the clinician may wish to treat the underlying myocardial disorder.
Again, the separation between the cause and effect should permit the
clinician to consider the long-term health of the patient’s myocardium,
rather than rushing to abolish a phenomenon that is not particularly
disadvantageous.

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AHA Diet Recommendations

To the Editor:
In a recent American Heart Association (AHA) Committee Report,
Grundy et al. wrote: “For the first time, the AHA has taken the
position that a diet recommendation for the healthy U.S. population is
warranted.” I believe this statement is in error. On June 8, 1964, the
AHA issued a three-page National Press Release entitled: ‘‘Heart Asso-
ciation Recommends Reduced Fat Consumption to Lessen Risk of Heart
 Attacks and Strokes.’’

The following are quotations from that release: ‘‘The action taken by
the Board of Directors broadening the application of the fats statement
to the general public should be placed on the record as soon as possible.
The Board acted favorably on a proposal to extend to the general public
the dietary recommendations of the American Heart Association’s 1961
statement, ‘‘Dietary Fat and its Relation to Heart Attacks and Strokes.’’ It
was made clear that a major purpose of the dietary recommendations is
to reduce blood levels of cholesterol. Evidence from many countries
suggests a relationship between the amount and type of fat consumed,
the amount of cholesterol in the blood, and the reported incidence of
coronary artery disease. The Association’s recommendations are thus
aimed at lowering blood levels of cholesterol in the belief that ‘‘reduction
in blood cholesterol may lessen the development or extension of athero-
sclerosis and hence the risk of heart attacks and strokes.’’

In 1965, the Los Angeles Heart Association, in response to the above,
obtained 1,300,000 educational brochures to dramatize ‘‘Reduce the
Risk of Heart Attack and Stroke’’ for distribution ‘‘into every home,’’
which must have included some of the healthy U.S. population.

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