

HEW



NEWS

U. S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION, AND WELFARE

REMARKS BY
SECRETARY JOSEPH A. CALIFANO, JR.
DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION, AND WELFARE
TO THE
NATIONAL COUNCIL ON ALCOHOLISM

Sheraton Park Hotel
Washington, D. C.

May 1, 1979

THANK YOU, MR. STEINHAUER.

I AM GLAD TO BE HERE -- TO SALUTE THIS ANNUAL FORUM OF THE NATIONAL COUNCIL ON ALCOHOLISM ON ITS 35TH ANNIVERSARY: THIS GATHERING OF DEVOTED PEOPLE WHO HAVE DONE SO MUCH TO SAVE AND SALVAGE LIVES.

AND I WELCOME THIS OPPORTUNITY TO OUTLINE A MAJOR NEW ADMINISTRATION INITIATIVE IN THE FIELD OF ALCOHOLISM.

I BRING YOU GREETINGS FROM PRESIDENT CARTER -- AND A COMMITMENT FROM HIM. THE NATIONAL GOVERNMENT HAS COME ONLY LATELY TO THIS FIELD. THE GOVERNMENT CAN NEVER BE -- AND SHOULD NEVER BE -- MORE THAN A PARTNER, GIVING HELP AND SUPPORT TO YOU. BUT WE INTEND TO BE A MORE EFFECTIVE PARTNER.

IT IS TIME TO PROVE TO THE AMERICAN PEOPLE THAT ALCOHOLISM IS NOT ONLY A TREATABLE DISEASE, BUT A BEATABLE DISEASE.

AS A BEGINNING, WE ARE DECLARING A NEW DAY OF EXCELLENCE FOR THE NATIONAL INSTITUTE OF ALCOHOL ABUSE

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AND ALCOHOLISM -- WHOSE NEW LEADER WAS SWORN IN JUST LAST WEEK: JOHN R. DELUCA OF NEW YORK.

AND WE ARE LAUNCHING TODAY A RANGE OF NEW EFFORTS TO SUPPORT YOUR CAUSE. FOR THE COMING YEAR, WE HAVE REQUESTED 22 MILLION NEW DOLLARS FOR TRAINING, PREVENTION AND TREATMENT IN THE FIELD OF ALCOHOLISM. THIS IS THE LARGEST INCREASE REQUESTED IN ANY PRESIDENT'S BUDGET SINCE THE LAUNCHING OF OUR NIAAA PROGRAMS.

IT IS FITTING THAT WE LAUNCH THIS NEW INITIATIVE IN THE MIDST OF HEW'S YEAR OF PREVENTION: A YEAR IN WHICH WE ARE WORKING TO FOCUS HEW PROGRAMS, AND THE ATTENTION OF THE NATION, ON THE VALUE OF EARLY DETECTION AND PROMPT TREATMENT; ON REACHING PROBLEMS BEFORE THEY EXPLODE INTO CRISES; ON EDUCATING PEOPLE ABOUT WHAT THEY CAN DO TO KEEP THEMSELVES HEALTHY.

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THAT IS THE PHILOSOPHY BEHIND OUR NEW EFFORT TO IMMUNIZE 90 PERCENT OF THE NATION'S CHILDREN AGAINST THE MAJOR PREVENTABLE CHILDHOOD DISEASES BY THE END OF THIS YEAR. THAT IS THE PHILOSOPHY BEHIND OUR INTENSIFIED SMOKING-AND-HEALTH PROGRAM, WHICH IS ALREADY SHOWING RESULTS.

AND THAT IS THE PHILOSOPHY BEHIND THE INITIATIVE I AM ANNOUNCING TODAY IN THE FIELD OF ALCOHOLISM AND ALCOHOL ABUSE.

THE STEPS WE WILL TAKE ARE BASED ON THREE FUNDAMENTAL PRINCIPLES:

- FIRST, THAT ALCOHOLISM IS A DISEASE -- AND A TREATABLE DISEASE;
- SECOND, THAT THIS DISEASE TOUCHES ALL OF US IN SOME WAY;
- AND THIRD, THAT THERE IS A ROLE FOR EVERY SECTOR OF OUR SOCIETY IN THE EFFORT TO CONQUER THIS DISEASE.

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YOU WHO HAVE TOILED SO LONG, WITH LIMITED RESOURCES;
YOU WHO HAVE SEEN SO MUCH HUMAN TRAGEDY CAN TAKE SATISFACTION
IN KNOWING THAT YOUR EFFORTS HAVE BORNE FRUIT:

- THE VEIL OF SHAME AND DENIAL THAT ONCE HUNG OVER THE DISEASE OF ALCOHOLISM IS LIFTING. MORE AND MORE COURAGEOUS AMERICANS -- FROM BETTY FORD TO WILBUR MILLS TO HAROLD HUGHES -- ARE STANDING UP AND SAYING, "I HAVE SUFFERED FROM THIS DISEASE, AND I AM RECOVERING." SOME OF THESE LEADERS ARE WITH US HERE TODAY: MR. MILLS; THE OSCAR-WINNING ACTRESS MERCEDES McCAMBRIDGE; AND THE GREAT HERO OF THE BROOKLYN DODGERS, DON NEWCOMBE.
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- FOR THE FIRST TIME IN MORE THAN HALF A CENTURY, THE DEATH RATE FROM CIRRHOSIS HAS GONE DOWN. THIS ACHIEVEMENT IS A TRIBUTE TO YOUR WORK IN PREVENTION IN EARLY INTERVENTION AND TREATMENT AND IN FOSTERING PUBLIC UNDERSTANDING OF ALCOHOLISM.

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- THE ALCOHOL BEVERAGE INDUSTRY IS ACTUALLY SUPPORTING AND JOINING IN THE EFFORT TO WARN PEOPLE ABOUT ALCOHOL ABUSE:
 - SINCE 1972, THE DISTILLED SPIRITS COUNCIL--DISCUS--HAS CONDUCTED PAID ADVERTISING CAMPAIGNS IN THE MAJOR MEDIA TO ENCOURAGE RESPONSIBLE USE OF THEIR PRODUCT. AND DISCUS HAS SPENT MORE THAN \$9 MILLION IN THE PAST TEN YEARS FOR RESEARCH INTO ALCOHOLISM AND ALCOHOL ABUSE.
 - THE UNITED STATES BREWERS ASSOCIATION HAS COMMITTED ITSELF TO A NEW NATIONWIDE EDUCATIONAL PROGRAM WITH THE THEME "THINK TWICE ABOUT DRINKING." ITS MESSAGE IS DIRECTED AT TEENAGERS--"IF YOU ARE UNDER-AGE, DON'T DRINK OUR BEER."

- THE WINE INSTITUTE HAS ADOPTED AN OCCUPATIONAL ALCOHOLISM PROGRAM TO PROVIDE HELP TO ITS OWN EMPLOYEES, AND AN ADVERTISING CODE TO PROMOTE MODERATION AND DISCOURAGE ABUSE.

I HAVE MET WITH INDUSTRY REPRESENTATIVES AND THEY HAVE PLEDGED TO DO EVEN MORE IN THE FUTURE. THIS REFLECTS A SPIRIT OF PUBLIC RESPONSIBILITY THAT I WANT TO APPLAUD AND ENCOURAGE TODAY.

THESE FACTS ARE SIGNS OF HOPE. THEY SUGGEST THAT YOUR MESSAGE IS GETTING THROUGH.

THE KEYNOTE OF YOUR MOVEMENT--AND OF MY REMARKS TODAY-- IS NOT PROHIBITION, BUT PRUDENCE. THE ENEMY IS NOT DRINKING, BUT PROBLEM DRINKING; ALCOHOLISM AND ALCOHOL ABUSE-- EXCESSIVE OR INAPPROPRIATE DRINKING THAT CAUSES PROBLEMS IN HEALTH, AT WORK, ON THE HIGHWAY, WITH THE LAW AND WITHIN FAMILIES.

WE HAVE, AS A NATION, MADE ENORMOUS PROGRESS. BUT WE HAVE A LONG, LONG WAY TO GO IF WE ARE TO EASE THE PAIN AND GRIEF THAT PROBLEM DRINKING CAUSES:

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- THE TOLL OF ALCOHOL-RELATED DEATHS IS AWESOME. ACROSS THE NATION EACH YEAR, NEARLY 100,000 PEOPLE DIE FROM CAUSES RELATED TO PROBLEM DRINKING. AND THIS NUMBER DOES NOT COUNT DEATHS FROM OTHER DISEASES IN WHICH ALCOHOL MAY BE INVOLVED.

- THE NUMBER OF THESE DEATHS AND THE FACT THAT SO MANY ARE CLEARLY PREVENTABLE MAKES PROBLEM DRINKING, AFTER SMOKING, PREVENTABLE PUBLIC HEALTH ENEMY NUMBER TWO IN AMERICA.

- CERTAINLY NO OTHER DISEASE EXACTS SUCH A FEARFUL ECONOMIC COST: TENS OF BILLIONS OF DOLLARS IN DIRECT HEALTH-CARE COSTS; IN LOST PRODUCTIVITY AND UNEMPLOYMENT; IN AUTO ACCIDENTS, VIOLENT CRIMES, FIRES AND SOCIAL-SERVICE COSTS. INFORMED ESTIMATES PUT THE ECONOMIC COST OF PROBLEM DRINKING AT MORE THAN \$40 BILLION EACH YEAR.*

WE ALL PICK UP THE TAB FOR THE THREE MARTINI LUNCH--
AND THE TAB IS \$40 BILLION.

*SOURCE: THIRD SPECIAL REPORT TO THE U.S. CONGRESS ON
ALCOHOL AND HEALTH, JUNE 1978.

THESE ARE THE NUMBERS WE HAVE; WE BELIEVE THAT MANY OF THEM MAY IN FACT BE TOO LOW. INDEED, ONE OF THE FIRST THINGS WE WANT TO DO IN THE EFFORT I WILL OUTLINE TODAY IS TO GET BETTER INFORMATION: TO ASK THE RIGHT QUESTIONS ABOUT ALCOHOLISM--AND TO GET MORE SOPHISTICATED DATA.

BUT MOST IMPORTANTLY, WE KNOW THAT THE COST OF THIS DISEASE IN HUMAN SUFFERING IS INCALCULABLE: IN HOMES DISRUPTED, IN CAREERS DERAILED, IN CHILDREN ABUSED AND TRAUMATIZED. EACH OF US KNOWS ONLY TOO WELL OF A FAMILY TORN APART, A TEENAGER CRIPPLED IN A CAR CRASH, A LIFE WRECKED BY PROBLEM DRINKING.

WE CAN, OF COURSE, HAVE AN IMPACT ON THESE TRAGIC NUMBERS ONLY IF WE MAKE HEADWAY AGAINST ANOTHER PROBLEM: THE PROBLEM OF PUBLIC UNDERSTANDING AND PUBLIC AWARENESS. FOR HERE, TOO, ALTHOUGH WE HAVE MADE GREAT PROGRESS, MORE REMAINS TO BE DONE.

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THERE ARE STILL TOO MANY PEOPLE AFRAID TO SEEK TREATMENT; TOO MANY WHO DO NOT YET KNOW THE DAMAGE THAT ALCOHOL ABUSE CAN CAUSE -- AND TOO MANY WHO PUT THEMSELVES AT RISK. THERE ARE STILL TOO MANY WHO MISTAKENLY FEEL THAT ALCOHOLISM IS NOT A TREATABLE DISEASE, BUT AN EMBARRASSING WEAKNESS, TO BE AGONIZED OVER IN SECRET.

IT IS A PERSISTENT MYTH THAT THE TYPICAL PROBLEM DRINKER IS A MIDDLE-AGED MAN HEADED FOR SKID ROW, LIKE THE DISINTEGRATING FIGURE IMMORTALIZED BY RAY MILLAND IN "THE LOST WEEKEND."

IN FACT THERE IS NO TYPICAL PROBLEM DRINKER.

THE PROBLEM DRINKER IS A WOMAN, TOO: A WOMAN WHOSE OUTWARD LIFE MAY SEEM PERFECT, EVEN PRIVILEGED -- BUT WHO FEELS OVERWHELMED; WHO ENDURES THE DISEASE OF ALCOHOLISM ALONE, IN SECRET.

THE PROBLEM DRINKER IS THE CLEAN-CUT TEENAGER IN YOUR NEIGHBORHOOD WHO MAY ONLY DRINK OCCASIONALLY, ON WEEKENDS, AT PARTIES: BUT WHO DRINKS TOO MUCH -- AND THEN DRIVES.

IT IS A MYTH THAT PROBLEM DRINKERS BELONG ONLY TO CERTAIN CLASSES OR RACES OR INCOME GROUPS; THAT THE PROBLEM IS "OUT THERE," IN THE GHETTO OR ON THE BOWERY.

IN FACT THE PROBLEM DRINKER MAY BE ANYONE: FAMOUS EXECUTIVE OR FACTORY FOREMAN; COMMUNITY LEADER OR CLERGYMAN; THE TRIAL LAWYER WHO DRINKS "FOR CONFIDENCE:" THE SURGEON WHO WON'T ADMIT THAT HIS DRINKING IS GETTING OUT OF HAND.

AND THE PROBLEM DRINKER'S PROBLEM IS OFTEN NOT SIMPLY ALCOHOL. IT IS A DEADLY COCKTAIL OF ALCOHOL, TRANQUILIZERS AND BARBITURATES.

CONSIDER THESE FACTS ABOUT PROBLEM DRINKING IN AMERICA:

THE NINE PERCENT OF OUR POPULATION WHO DRINK MOST HEAVILY CONSUME 60 PERCENT OF THE ALCOHOL.

THERE ARE, IT IS ESTIMATED, NINE TO TEN MILLION ADULT PROBLEM DRINKERS AMONG US: MORE THAN TWO MILLION OF THEM WOMEN; A SIGNIFICANT NUMBER OF THEM ELDERLY.

LAST YEAR, IN ADDITION, MORE THAN THREE MILLION TEENAGERS HAD PROBLEMS RESULTING FROM DRINKING.

AT LEAST ONE THIRD OF ALL HOSPITAL ADMISSIONS ARE RELATED TO PROBLEM DRINKING. AND THE PERCENTAGE MAY BE HIGHER. INDEED, IN SOME AREAS ALCOHOL ABUSE IS THE LEADING CAUSE OF HOSPITAL ADMISSIONS.

SEVEN PERCENT OF THE NATION'S ADULT POPULATION ARE PROBLEM DRINKERS. THAT PERCENTAGE, APPLIED IN THE WORLD OF OUR DAILY EXPERIENCE, MEANS THAT THE PROBLEM IS EVERYWHERE: IF A COMPANY HAS 1,000 EMPLOYEES, IT MEANS 70 OF ITS WORKERS MAY HAVE DRINKING PROBLEMS.

SO, THE PROBLEM IS NOT "OUT THERE;" IT IS IN OUR MIDST. IT TOUCHES VIRTUALLY EVERY AMERICAN NEIGHBORHOOD, EVERY OFFICE, AND EVERY FAMILY. THIS PROBLEM DOES NOT JUST LIVE ON SKID ROW, IT LIVES ON MAIN STREET.

IT IS A MYTH, FINALLY, THAT PROBLEM DRINKING IS A DEAD END, AN INSOLUBLE DILEMMA.

QUITE THE CONTRARY: THE AMERICAN PEOPLE NEED TO KNOW THAT ALCOHOLISM IS A DISEASE THAT CAN BE SUCCESSFULLY TREATED.

IF WE FACE IT SQUARELY,

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IF WE FOCUS PROPERLY ALL OUR DIVERSE RESOURCES:
FEDERAL PROGRAMS, STATE AND LOCAL EFFORTS, AND THE WORK
OF MILLIONS OF VOLUNTEERS.

IF WE CARE ENOUGH.

FOR THE PAST TWELVE MONTHS, WE AT HEW HAVE BEEN AT
WORK TO DEVELOP A MAJOR NEW INITIATIVE IN THIS FIELD:
TO BRING NEW ENERGY, NEW RESOURCES, AND NEW DIRECTION
TO ALL OUR EFFORTS AGAINST ALCOHOLISM. TODAY I CAN
ANNOUNCE TO YOU THE MAJOR ELEMENTS OF THAT INITIATIVE.

I. SPECIAL TARGET PROBLEMS AND POPULATIONS

FIRST: WE WILL LAUNCH NEW EFFORTS AIMED AT SPECIFIC
POPULATION GROUPS AND PROBLEM AREAS.

ALCOHOL ABUSE IS A SERIOUS DANGER TO TEENAGERS. THE
NUMBER OF HIGH SCHOOL STUDENTS WHO ADMIT BEING INTOXICATED
AT LEAST ONCE A MONTH NEARLY DOUBLED BETWEEN 1966 AND 1975,
FROM 10 TO 19 PERCENT.

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ALCOHOL-RELATED ACCIDENTS ARE THE LEADING CAUSE OF DEATHS IN THE 15 TO 24 YEAR AGE GROUP; THEY ACCOUNT FOR MORE THAN 8,000 DEATHS PER YEAR. IN ADDITION, MORE THAN 40,000 YOUNG PEOPLE ARE HURT EVERY YEAR IN DRINKING AND DRIVING ACCIDENTS -- MANY OF THEM CRIPPLED, PARALYZED, OR OTHERWISE DISABLED FOR LIFE.

TO DEAL WITH PROBLEM DRINKING AMONG TEENAGERS AND YOUNG PEOPLE:

- WE ARE REQUESTING A FOURFOLD BUDGET INCREASE IN FISCAL 1980 FROM \$2.8 MILLION TO \$12.5 MILLION FOR EDUCATION, PREVENTION, TREATMENT AND RESEARCH.
- WE WILL DEVELOP AND FUND FIVE COMPREHENSIVE ALCOHOLISM PREVENTION PROJECTS, TARGETED AT 750,000 YOUNG PEOPLE, WITH THE HELP OF THE BOY SCOUTS, GIRL SCOUTS, CATHOLIC YOUTH ORGANIZATIONS, AND OTHERS.

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- IN COOPERATION WITH THE DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION, THE NATIONAL MEDIA, AND WITH THE HELP OF THE ALCOHOL BEVERAGE INDUSTRY, WE WILL LAUNCH AN INFORMATION CAMPAIGN TO ENCOURAGE SENSIBLE ATTITUDES TOWARD DRINKING AMONG THE 40 MILLION YOUNG PEOPLE AGE 15 TO 24. THIS PROGRAM WILL EMPHASIZE AUTO SAFETY; WE MUST REDUCE THE CARNAGE ON THIS NATION'S HIGHWAYS.

WE WILL ALSO FOCUS SPECIAL ATTENTION ON THE GROWING PROBLEM OF ALCOHOLISM AMONG WOMEN.

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IN MY VISITS TO ALCOHOL TREATMENT PROJECTS AROUND THE NATION, IT HAS STRUCK ME THAT TOO FEW PROGRAMS HAVE FOCUSED ON WOMEN: UPON TREATMENT, PREVENTION, TRAINING AND RESEARCH FOR THE SPECIAL ALCOHOL PROBLEMS OF WOMEN.

TO REMEDY THIS SITUATION, WE ARE TRIPLING THE FUNDS DEVOTED TO WOMEN. FOR FISCAL 1980, WE ARE REQUESTING \$11.85 MILLION.

- TO INCREASE RESEARCH INTO ALCOHOL PROBLEMS AMONG WOMEN;
- TO EXPAND OUR SUPPORT FOR TREATMENT PROGRAMS;
- TO LAUNCH A NATIONWIDE PROGRAM OF OUTREACH AND EDUCATION ABOUT WOMEN AND ALCOHOLISM, INVOLVING INDUSTRY, LABOR, VOLUNTARY AGENCIES AND NATIONAL WOMEN'S ORGANIZATIONS.

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WE WILL DEVOTE NEW RESOURCES TO A TRAGIC OFFSHOOT OF ALCOHOL ABUSE: FETAL ALCOHOL SYNDROME, THE THIRD LEADING CAUSE OF BIRTH DEFECTS -- AND THE NUMBER ONE PREVENTABLE CAUSE OF SUCH DEFECTS. LAST YEAR, ONE IN EVERY 2000 BABIES BORN HAD A PHYSICAL OR MENTAL IMPAIRMENT CAUSED BY A MOTHER'S ALCOHOL INTAKE DURING PREGNANCY.

- WE WILL STEP UP OUR SUPPORT FOR RESEARCH INTO THIS PROBLEM.
- WE WILL EXPAND OUR EFFORTS TO REACH POTENTIAL PARENTS -- ESPECIALLY THE 48 MILLION AMERICAN WOMEN OF CHILDBEARING AGE -- WITH WARNINGS ABOUT THE DANGERS OF ALCOHOL FOR UNBORN BABIES.
- TO INSURE THAT PEOPLE KNOW THAT SOME MEDICINES CONTAIN CONSIDERABLE ALCOHOL, THE FDA WILL LAUNCH PROCEEDINGS NEXT MONTH TO DETERMINE WHETHER WARNING LABELS TO PREGNANT WOMEN AND OTHERS SHOULD BE REQUIRED ON DRUGS WHICH CONTAIN SIGNIFICANT AMOUNTS OF ALCOHOL.

WE WILL AIM NEW EFFORTS ALSO AT ALCOHOL PROBLEMS AMONG SEVERAL OTHER TARGET GROUPS: THE ELDERLY, AMERICAN INDIANS, AND VETERANS, MAX CLELAND, THE ABLE HEAD OF THE VETERANS ADMINISTRATION, HAS TOLD US THAT ONE FOURTH OF THE PATIENTS IN VA HOSPITALS ARE THERE BECAUSE THEY DRINK TOO MUCH.

II. IMPROVING THE HEALTH CARE SYSTEM

SECOND: WE WILL USE OUR RESOURCES AND OUR LEADERSHIP TO CHANGE THE NATION'S HEALTH CARE SYSTEM: TO HELP IT DO A BETTER JOB, FROM BEGINNING TO END, IN DEALING WITH THIS PUBLIC HEALTH PROBLEM.

- WE NEED TO STEP UP OUR EFFORTS TO MAKE TREATMENT OF ALCOHOLISM A STANDARD FEATURE OF THE HEALTH CARE CURRICULUM. WE WILL DEVOTE \$2 MILLION TO 15 SPECIAL NEW PROGRAMS IN MEDICAL SCHOOLS FOR TEACHING FUTURE DOCTORS HOW TO TREAT ALCOHOLISM. AND WE WILL SEEK WAYS TO IMPROVE CONTINUING EDUCATION IN THE FIELD OF ALCOHOLISM FOR HEALTH CARE WORKERS.

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- WE WILL REQUIRE ALL FEDERALLY-QUALIFIED HEALTH MAINTENANCE ORGANIZATIONS TO PROVIDE DIAGNOSTIC AND REFERRAL SERVICES ON AN INPATIENT OR OUTPATIENT BASIS TO THEIR MEMBERS WHO ARE ALCOHOLICS OR ALCOHOL ABUSERS.

- AT PRESENT, UNDER MEDICARE AND MEDICAID, ALCOHOLISM SERVICES EITHER ARE NOT COVERED, OR ARE PROVIDED ONLY IN COSTLY, ACUTE CARE SETTINGS LIKE HOSPITAL WARDS. I HAVE THEREFORE DIRECTED THE HEALTH CARE FINANCING ADMINISTRATION TO REVIEW ITS POLICIES. HCFA WILL DEVOTE \$1 MILLION TO DEMONSTRATION PROJECTS TO PROVIDE ALCOHOLISM SERVICES IN NEW, LESS EXPENSIVE AND MORE EFFECTIVE WAYS. AND HCFA WILL REVIEW MEDICARE AND MEDICAID RULES IN AN ATTEMPT TO COVER SUCH SERVICES ON A BROADER BASIS.

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- WE WILL WORK ALSO WITH PRIVATE HEALTH INSURANCE COMPANIES -- TO ENCOURAGE THEM TO OFFER BROADER COVERAGE OF ALCOHOLISM TREATMENT. SOME OF THE LEADING COMPANIES IN THE HEALTH INSURANCE FIELD ARE ALREADY MOVING ON THIS FRONT. I RECENTLY SPOKE ABOUT THIS WITH THE PRESIDENT OF THE EQUITABLE LIFE ASSURANCE SOCIETY, WHICH HAS JUST EXPANDED ITS COVERAGE OF ALCOHOL-RELATED PROBLEMS. AETNA LIFE AND CASUALTY HAS ALSO BEEN AN INNOVATOR IN THIS AREA. I COMMEND THESE COMPANIES FOR THEIR VISION AND THEIR GOOD BUSINESS SENSE -- FOR TOGETHER WE HAVE LEARNED THAT BETTER COVERAGE HELPS DIRECT PEOPLE TO THE MOST APPROPRIATE TREATMENT CENTERS, WHERE OFTEN THEY CAN GET THE EARLIEST, MOST EFFECTIVE, LEAST COSTLY HELP.

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- WE MUST LEARN WHAT COMBINATION OF SKILLS AND TRAINING MAKES FOR THE BEST ALCOHOL COUNSELORS AND OTHER WORKERS IN THIS FIELD. ACCORDINGLY, WE WILL LAUNCH A NEW RESEARCH PROGRAM TO ANSWER THAT QUESTION. WHEN WE HAVE DONE THAT, WE WILL SEEK A MAJOR COMMITMENT OF RESOURCES FOR WHAT THIS FIELD SO URGENTLY NEEDS: TRAINING PROGRAMS TO DEVELOP SKILLED PROFESSIONALS.

III NEW EFFORTS TO DEAL WITH COMBINATION ABUSE

THIRD: WE WILL TAKE MAJOR NEW STEPS TO PROTECT THE PUBLIC AGAINST THE SPECIAL DANGERS OF COMBINING ALCOHOL WITH OTHER DRUGS. IN OUR HEAVILY-MEDICATED SOCIETY, IN WHICH MILLIONS OF PRESCRIPTIONS FOR TRANQUILIZERS, BARBITURATES, AND PAIN RELIEVERS ARE DISPENSED EACH YEAR, PEOPLE ARE NOT ALWAYS AWARE JUST WHAT DRUGS THEY ARE TAKING; TOO OFTEN DOCTORS MAY NOT TAKE TIME TO CONSIDER ALL THE DIFFERENT DRUGS THEIR PATIENTS ARE TAKING; SOMETIMES SLEEPING PILLS, TRANQUILIZERS, DARVON OR OTHERS ARE GIVEN TO AN ALCOHOLIC PATIENT -- AND ALL TOO SOON, A COMBINATION ABUSER IS CREATED.

SO WE ARE INCREASINGLY CONCERNED ABOUT THE DANGERS OF ALCOHOL USED IN COMBINATION WITH CERTAIN OTHER DRUGS, ESPECIALLY SEDATIVES AND TRANQUILIZERS. THIS "COMBINATION ABUSE" CAN KILL--AND DOES KILL--THOUSANDS OF PEOPLE EACH YEAR.

TO DEAL WITH COMBINATION ABUSE:

- THE SURGEON GENERAL WILL ISSUE A SPECIAL ADVISORY TO ALL PHYSICIANS IN THE NATION WARNING THEM OF THE DANGERS OF COMBINATION USE OF ALCOHOL AND CERTAIN DRUGS. WE WILL URGE THEM TO LIMIT THE AMOUNT OF DRUGS DISPENSED WITH EACH PRESCRIPTION, AND TO MONITOR CAREFULLY PRESCRIPTIONS TO PATIENTS WHO MAY HAVE ALCOHOL PROBLEMS.
- I HAVE ASKED THE FOOD AND DRUG ADMINISTRATION TO PROVIDE ME, WITHIN 60 DAYS, WITH A LIST OF THOSE COMMONLY PRESCRIBED DRUGS THAT MAY PRESENT HEALTH HAZARDS WHEN USED WITH ALCOHOL, AND FOR WHICH NEW LABEL WARNINGS MAY BE NEEDED. AMONG THOSE COMMON DRUGS ARE SEDATIVES SUCH AS BARBITURATES, AND TRANQUILIZERS LIKE VALIUM AND LIBRIUM.

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- THE FOOD AND DRUG ADMINISTRATION WILL PUBLISH WARNINGS ON THE DANGERS OF COMBINING ALCOHOL WITH SPECIFIC DRUGS IN ITS DRUG BULLETIN WHICH IS WIDELY READ AMONG HEALTH PROFESSIONALS; IT WILL ALSO PUBLISH SUCH INFORMATION IN THE BROADLY-CIRCULATED FDA CONSUMER MAGAZINE.

IV WORK-BASED ALCOHOLISM PROGRAMS

FOURTH: WE HAVE LEARNED THAT ONE OF THE MOST EFFECTIVE SETTINGS FOR IDENTIFYING AND TREATING PROBLEM DRINKERS IS AT WORK. DRINKING PROBLEMS SURFACE EARLY IN THE FORM OF PROBLEMS AT WORK -- AND MOST EMPLOYEES TAKE PRIDE IN THEIR WORK AND WANT TO KEEP THEIR JOBS. YET THESE PROGRAMS ARE AVAILABLE TO LESS THAN 20 PERCENT OF THE NATION'S WORKERS. SO THE THIRD MAJOR ELEMENT OF OUR NEW INITIATIVE WILL BE WORK-BASED ALCOHOLISM PROGRAMS.

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- WE WILL BEGIN BY PUTTING OUR OWN HOUSE IN ORDER HERE IN THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT. WE INTEND TO MAKE HEW'S OWN EMPLOYEE ASSISTANCE PROGRAM A MODEL BY INCREASING SUPPORT FOR IT SIXFOLD, FROM \$250,000 TO \$1.45 MILLION. AND WE WILL HELP OTHER GOVERNMENT AGENCIES BUILD BETTER PROGRAMS OF THEIR OWN. I AM WRITING TO CABINET SECRETARIES AND OTHER AGENCY HEADS TO ENLIST THEIR SUPPORT FOR THESE PROGRAMS, AND WE ARE ESTABLISHING A SPECIAL UNIT AT NIAAA TO ASSIST THEM IN THESE EFFORTS.

- WE ARE TAKING THE LEAD IN HELPING THE PRIVATE SECTOR EXTEND THE REACH OF EMPLOYEE ALCOHOLISM PROGRAMS. I AM SENDING A LETTER TO THE HEADS OF THE NATION'S 500 LARGEST CORPORATIONS AND TO THE LEADERS OF THE MAJOR UNIONS, ENCOURAGING THEM TO FOLLOW THE OUTSTANDING LEADERSHIP OF GEORGE MEANY AND JIM ROCHE, WHOM YOU WILL HONOR TODAY, IN THEIR EFFORTS TO ESTABLISH OR IMPROVE THE NATION'S WORK-BASED ALCOHOLISM PROGRAMS.

- I AM ALSO WRITING TO THE NATION'S GOVERNORS, URGING THOSE WITHOUT EMPLOYEE ALCOHOLISM PROGRAMS TO ESTABLISH THEM, AND ASKING THOSE WHO HAVE PROGRAMS TO TAKE A PERSONAL INTEREST IN IMPROVING THEM. I AM WRITING A SIMILAR LETTER TO THE MAYORS OF OUR 40 LARGEST CITIES.

- AND WE WILL CONVENE THIS FALL A NATIONAL CONFERENCE ON OCCUPATIONAL ALCOHOLISM PROGRAMS, TO WHICH WE ARE INVITING A WIDE RANGE OF PUBLIC AND PRIVATE EMPLOYERS, LABOR LEADERS AND VOLUNTARY AGENCY LEADERS. THE CONFERENCE WILL PROVIDE A FORUM FOR THE EXCHANGE OF IDEAS AND TECHNIQUES.

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IN ALL THESE WAYS AND MANY MORE AS TIME GOES ON, WE ARE SHARPENING OUR EFFORTS TO HELP YOU TO HELP OTHERS. IN THIS EFFORT, THE INSCRIPTION ON THE SEAL OF HEW HAS ESPECIALLY POIGNANT MEANING: IT TRANSLATES, "HOPE IS THE ANCHOR OF LIFE."

IN EVERY ONE OF THESE EFFORTS, I AM ACUTELY AWARE OF HOW LITTLE GOVERNMENT CAN DO -- AND HOW MUCH YOU CAN DO. GOVERNMENT, AFTER ALL, CAN ONLY LEND SUPPORT TO YOU AND YOUR COLLEAGUES: ESPECIALLY TO HUNDREDS OF THOUSANDS OF VOLUNTEERS, MANY OF THEM RECOVERED ALCOHOLICS THEMSELVES, WHO ARE WORKING HEROICALLY TO CONTAIN THIS DISEASE.

I AM AWARE ALSO THAT THE MAJORITY OF RECOVERED ALCOHOLICS HAVE BEEN LED BACK TO HEALTH BY AN ORGANIZATION CALLED ALCOHOLICS ANONYMOUS. AA, ALANON AND ALATEEN HAVE EXTENDED HOPE AND HELP TO MILLIONS OF AMERICANS, AND THEY DESERVE OUR THANKS.

OUR ROLE IS TO SUPPORT, NOT SUPPLANT, YOUR EFFORTS. BUT WE IN GOVERNMENT CAN DO A GREAT DEAL TO HELP. WE CAN SUPPORT PROGRAMS OF RESEARCH THAT LEAD TO MORE EFFECTIVE TREATMENT AND PREVENTION EFFORTS. WE CAN LEND ASSISTANCE TO PROGRAMS AT THE STATE AND LOCAL LEVEL. WE CAN PROVIDE A CLEARING-HOUSE FOR INFORMATION AND IDEAS. WE CAN HELP TRAIN THE PEOPLE -- THE COUNSELORS AND OTHER PROFESSIONALS -- WHO ARE NEEDED SO DESPERATELY TO WORK IN THIS FIELD.

WE CAN DO IT -- AND WE ARE GOING TO DO IT.

IT IS TO GIVE YOU THAT ASSURANCE -- AND TO GIVE YOU, ON BEHALF OF THE NATION, OUR HEARTFELT THANKS -- THAT I HAVE COME HERE TODAY.

THANK YOU.

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