



Indian Health Service

November 26, 2003

Thanksgiving Day, November 27, 2003

Statement

“Thankful for the Gift to Help Others”

by

Charles W. Grim, D.D.S., M.H.S.A.

Assistant Surgeon General

Director, Indian Health Service

On this Thanksgiving, most of us have much to be thankful for -- our health, our family, our freedom, a roof over our heads, and food on our table; things that so many of us take for granted. But tomorrow we should stop for a moment and realize that there are many people in this world, and even in our own great nation, who are hungry, afraid, lonely, homeless, or ill. And we should keep in our thoughts of thanks those members of our families and communities who are far from home, helping others establish the fundamental liberties and rights that we enjoy, and of those who have given their life in that quest.

Here at the Indian Health Service, we work daily to try to alleviate some of the suffering in the world through our work to improve the health and well-being of American Indian and Alaska Native people. We have a right to be proud of our accomplishments, but also an obligation to remember that there is still much to be done and many left to help. We should all take a moment tomorrow, with our family and friends surrounding us, to think of those less fortunate, to be truly grateful for all our blessings, and to appreciate that we have been entrusted with the gift to help others.

I wish you and yours a happy Thanksgiving, and thank you for all you do to help make the world a better place for everyone.