

Lecture June 15, 1988

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Remarks

By

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A great many cities in the United States have similar societies to the host's. The one in Washington was composed chiefly of people in government whose interest were those of the people in government. The remarks are included in this archive for several reasons. First, I wanted the public to know that the Surgeon General talked on occasions like this, I wanted to show that the Surgeon General was able to present in staccato form a tremendous amount of information in a relatively short period of time, and finally that the Surgeon General did not consider this type of presentation to that type of society a frivolous occupation.

I discussed an amazing number of things in a very short time: the Rose Cipollone case against Liggett & Myers, the Supreme Court ruling against the FDA holding it liable for injuries incurred by persons receiving FDA-improved vaccines, 6 Cipollone-like cases, the inevitable changes in the tobacco world based upon scientific evidence linking cigarettes to disability and premature death, the Surgeon General's Reports of the last several years, the possible economic and social chaos that will come from the demise of the tobacco industry as we know it, risks versus benefits in our society, the patchwork quilt of laws governing dangerous or potentially dangerous substances in the market place, vaccine liability fund, "zero risk tolerance", the "Delaney Clause" in the FDA law, the Environmental Protection Agency, the Department of Agriculture, the Nuclear Regulatory Commission, the stability of the AIDS epidemic thus far, risks groups in AIDS, safe sexual activity, the sharing of needles among intravenous drug abusers, pediatric AIDS, the unchanging percentage of AIDS cases based upon behavior previously and now, the heterosexual spread of AIDS, the homosexual community, the lack of an AIDS vaccine, and education as our only weapon against AIDS.

For users who do not know what the "Delaney Clause" means, it was a clause placed in the law many years ago that anything proven to be carcinogenic could not be used in products for human consumption. The problem was that when the "Delaney Clause" was enacted, we could test for carcinogens in parts per million. At the time this lecture was outlined we could detect carcinogens in parts quadrillion. The former concentration may be lethal the later concentration not so. Hence, the great dilemma over the "Delaney

Clause”. That tied in with the fact that the Department of Agriculture, the Environmental Protection Agency, and the Nuclear Regulatory Commission have no “Delaney Clause” in their laws and do not recognize “zero risk tolerance” as the only permissible threshold to cross on the way to the open market. The reason for my stating all this is that we need to ask ourselves -- as a highly industrialized science based society – how we want to manage risks in order to obtain the benefits of society and industry.

Because of the manner of which I presented this there is no index.