



Rehabilitation Institute of Chicago

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October 19, 1981

C. Everett Koop, M.D.
Deputy Assistant Secretary
for Health Services
Department of Health and
Human Services
Humphrey Building
716 G
200 Independence
Washington, D.C. 20201

Dear Dr. Koop:

Your keynote address at the Polio Conference was excellent; was inspiring to the participants; and gave me a lot of very useful statistics. The piece de resistance of course was your extemporaneous commitment to a "magna carta" for disabled people.

I thought also that your Blessing of dinner was wonderful and encompassed the inspiring aspects of the handicapped people there and Allen's great dedication to this cause.

I am sure you must realize my enthusiasm at the thought of having a Surgeon General who has a concern for disabled people. As I indicated, I feel that there has been a terrible void in leadership at the Federal level in relation to the problems of the disabled; and it is evident that you will fill that void. I know that it is debated as to whether the Federal Government or it should be the States managing the affairs of the disabled. Organizationally and administratively I understand the validity to the debate, but I can't help but think that a national "presence" at least in respect to policy is not an important goal to achieve.

As I told you, I have felt chagrin to see so much of Mary Switzer's momentum diminished. Of course I am very subjective about this since I am so personally involved with the cause of the handicapped. But even as a citizen, I have felt it was unfortunate to slowly make impotent the little agency that really was one of the most effective particularly in relation to its size and budget. Considering that there



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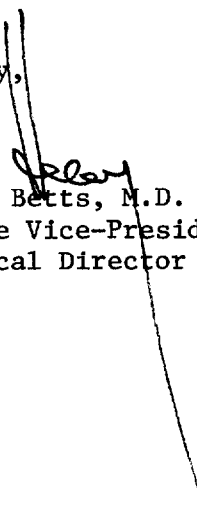
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are so many wasteful and even monstrous bureaucratic efforts in Washington, it has seemed a terrible irony that the one that was assuredly cost-effective and even penurious should be relatively extinguished.

I hope our paths will cross again soon; and of course I wish you tremendous success and the realization of great fulfillment in your new job.

Sincerely,


Henry B. Betts, M.D.
Executive Vice-President
& Medical Director

HBB/meb