

S. I. HAYAKAWA
CALIFORNIA

PATTY WHITE
ADMINISTRATIVE ASSISTANT

Ann Moore
224-3841

United States Senate
WASHINGTON, D.C. 20510

COMMITTEES:
AGRICULTURE, NUTRITION,
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FOREIGN RELATIONS
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October 23, 1981

Dr. C. Everett Koop
Surgeon General - Designate
Department of Health and Human Services
200 Independence Avenue, Southwest
Washington, D.C. 20201

Dear Dr. Koop:

The delay in Senate consideration of your nomination to be Surgeon General has provided me with the opportunity to clarify some comments you have made about your views on abortion, reproductive research, and family planning.

Contrary to your recent assurances, I am concerned that your previously stated opposition to abortion would prejudice your actions in your official position as Surgeon General. The duties of this position will undoubtedly require you to make judgments in many areas in which you have strong personal convictions.

I am particularly concerned about the Surgeon General's role in determining the activities of the Public Health Service Commissioned Corps, researchers at the National Institutes of Health, and health personnel funded by United States foreign aid. As an advisor in these areas, you may be required to approve or reject practices such as abortion, amniocentesis, reproductive research, and certain forms of contraception. I am concerned that your decisions in these matters would be made on the basis of your personal beliefs, rather than unbiased scientific data.

The decisions and opinions of the Surgeon General can affect millions of lives. I would like your personal assurance that those decisions will be objective and will take into account all scientific evidence on reproductive matters, abortion, and family planning. I look forward to your response.

Sincerely yours,

S. I. Hayakawa
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