

GREETINGS

BY

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TO THE PARKLAWN CHAPTER OF  
BLACKS IN GOVERNMENT (BIG)  
TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 9, 1982

DR. BRANDT, THE ASSISTANT SECRETARY FOR HEALTH, IS SPEAKING TO THE FACULTY AND STUDENTS OF THE COLLEGE OF MEDICINE AT HOWARD UNIVERSITY TODAY, SO IT IS MY PRIVILEGE TO BE HERE TO REPRESENT HIS OFFICE AND, INDEED, THE PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICE.

IN PRESIDENT REAGAN'S MESSAGE ON BLACK HISTORY MONTH, HE SAID, "UNDERSTANDING OUR PAST IS THE FOUNDATION FOR FULL PARTICIPATION IN THE LIFE OF OUR COUNTRY." I WANT TO EMPHASIZE HIS USE OF THE WORD "OUR." I COME HERE TODAY IN THE SPIRIT OF CELEBRATING OUR HISTORY -- BLACK HISTORY, AFRO-AMERICAN HISTORY, IS A PART OF MY HISTORY, ALSO. THE BLACK PAST IS PART OF MY PAST. BLACK LIFE IN THIS COUNTRY IS PART OF MY LIFE IN THIS COUNTRY. THIS DESIGNATION OF FEBRUARY AS NATIONAL AFRO-AMERICAN -- OR BLACK -- HISTORY MONTH IS IMPORTANT TO ALL OF US, REGARDLESS OF OUR COLOR. THIS IS MY MONTH, TOO.

AND THAT'S WHY I BELIEVE ALL OF US HAVE A JOB TO DO -- TOGETHER -- TO MAKE LIFE IN THE UNITED STATES A FULFILLED DREAM FOR EVERY PERSON. THIS IS THE SPECIAL CHARGE, I THINK, FOR THOSE OF US IN THE PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICE. WE NEED TO REMAIN VIGILANT FOR THE PROTECTION OF ALL OUR PEOPLE...VIGILANT AGAINST DISEASE AND AGAINST HUNGER...VIGILANT AGAINST DISABILITIES AND THE

HANDICAPS THAT SOCIETY CAN PLACE UPON THE DISABLED, THE POOR, THE AGED, AND THE DISADVANTAGED...VIGILANT AGAINST PREJUDICE OF ANY KIND -- RACIAL OR RELIGIOUS, PREJUDICE AGAINST COLOR OR SEX, PREJUDICE AGAINST OTHER CULTURES AND WAYS OF LIFE.

PUBLIC HEALTH TAKES IN PHYSICAL HEALTH, MENTAL HEALTH, AND SOCIAL HEALTH. THE HISTORY OF PUBLIC HEALTH IS RICH WITH PEOPLE OF EVERY RACE AND NATIONALITY WHO WORKED TO IMPROVE THE TOTAL HEALTH OF THE AMERICAN PEOPLE. THIS MONTH, LET'S MAKE SURE WE REMEMBER THE CONTRIBUTIONS MADE BY BLACK MEN AND WOMEN FOR MORE THAN TWO CENTURIES, CONTRIBUTIONS THAT HELPED LAY THE FOUNDATION FOR OUR GENERAL NATIONAL HEALTH TODAY.

AND LET'S ALSO MAKE SURE THAT WE INCLUDE IN TODAY'S COMMUNITY OF PUBLIC HEALTH LEADERSHIP THE NATIONAL MEDICAL ASSOCIATION AND THE NATIONAL DENTAL ASSOCIATION, THE NATIONAL BLACK NURSES ASSOCIATION, THE ASSOCIATION OF BLACK PSYCHOLOGISTS, AND THEIR VERY IMPORTANT STUDENT AFFILIATES. THESE AND OTHER PREDOMINANTLY BLACK ORGANIZATIONS OF HEALTH PROFESSIONALS HAVE MADE -- AND WILL CONTINUE TO MAKE -- IMPORTANT CONTRIBUTIONS TO BLACK HISTORY, TO PUBLIC HEALTH HISTORY, AND TO THE HISTORY OF THIS NATION, YOUR HISTORY AND MINE.

IN THE SAME VEIN, LET ME SAY THAT THE PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICE IS COMMITTED TO THE GOALS OF THE ADMINISTRATION'S INITIATIVE TO HELP THE HISTORICALLY BLACK COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES. LAST SEPTEMBER, PRESIDENT REAGAN, BY EXECUTIVE ORDER, INSTRUCTED EVERY FEDERAL DEPARTMENT AND AGENCY TO DRAW UP A PLAN FOR PROVIDING THIS HELP.

WHAT WE'RE TALKING ABOUT IS MAKING SURE THAT YOUNG, TALENTED BLACK MEN AND WOMEN ATTENDING HISTORICALLY BLACK COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES HAVE THE OPPORTUNITY FOR EXCELLENCE. SECRETARY SCHWEIKER, ASSISTANT SECRETARY BRANDT, AND I, TOGETHER WITH THE HEADS OF EACH PUBLIC HEALTH SERVICE AGENCY, JOIN WITH THE PRESIDENT IN ELIMINATING "REGULATORY BARRIERS...INEQUITIES AND DISADVANTAGES" THAT MIGHT PREVENT THOSE COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES, THEIR STUDENTS, AND THEIR FACULTY FROM FULL PARTICIPATION IN FEDERAL PROGRAMS.

IN FUTURE YEARS, WHEN AFRO-AMERICAN HISTORY MONTH IS CELEBRATED, THEY WILL BE THE PEOPLE STANDING TALL IN THE CEREMONIES. I ASK ALL OF YOU TO HELP US MAKE SURE THAT THIS IS THE PICTURE OF THE FUTURE.

ONCE AGAIN, THANK YOU FOR GIVING ME THESE FEW MOMENTS ON THE PROGRAM. AND FOR MYSELF AND FOR ASSISTANT SECRETARY BRANDT, BEST WISHES ON TODAY'S ACTIVITIES.

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