

Lecture December 16, 1988

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Address

By

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Of the

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U.S. Department of Health and Human Services

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Because of the instructions by the court already referred to, I announced that the findings of this final session would be considered as preliminary and that the proceedings will remain open to January 15, 1989 to allow interested parties to present in writing their points of view to me and the various expert panel chairpersons. The final report will not be sent to the publisher until February 28.

I then announced that the workshop would have the privilege later on in the afternoon of hearing from the National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (Jeffrey Miller had to substitute for Diane Steed), and Loren Archer, Deputy Director of the National Institute on Alcohol Abuse and Alcoholism who was speaking for Enoch Gordis, Director of the NIAA, and Fred Goodwin, Administrator, ADAHMA. They will speak from their specific positions of expertise and after that I will respond to the recommendations of the several panels. And then I will inform the group of how so many people and organizations mounted an effort to keep this workshop from happening.

After the guest speakers had made their presentations I returned and opened my final remarks with the concern that no reasonable people believed that drunk driving should be tolerated. Yet people shy away from any discussion deeper than "Isn't it terrible". Leadership is hard to come by because it is a lonely position. Although the workshop had the enthusiastic representation of five Cabinet departments in planning, only one Cabinet Secretary, Dr. Otis Bowen, appeared at this meeting.

Everything I said was from copious notes I made during the previous two days, but it was unprepared and read from my own unreadable handwriting and then transcribed from a recording. I then covered the findings of the panel on Pricing and Availability, Advertising and Marketing, Epidemiology, Education, Judicial and Administrative Enforcement, Transportation, Injury Control and Treatment, and Citizen Advocacy,

In reference to Injury Control and Treatment, I promised to notify 8 national medical societies (and any others that are recommended to me) as well as 4 national societies that have to do with the education of youths. I also will be in touch with the Boy Scouts, Girl Scouts, Camp Fire Girls, 4-H Clubs and others.

I promised to convene a group to consider the formation of a non-profit corporation of the 501-C3 type to act as an umbrella for a coalition to be supported by dues and to set its own agenda. I promised to provide the funds to pay legal fees and other expenses to get this off the ground.

Then in reference to all panels I promised to get a copy of the final document to every senator and congressman with an appropriate cover letter. I would do the same for the chiefs of staff of the various congressional committees that could have a legislative interest in these recommendations. To present these findings in detail with additional comments to the Association of State and territorial Health Officers at their annual meeting in the spring, to seek an appropriate opportunity to address municipal and county health officers in the same manner, to personally sit down with the new Secretary of the Department of Health and Human Services soon and with the new Surgeon General eventually and solicit their personal involvement because of the gravity of the situation and the need for action, and wherever possible, to lay the burden on government agencies, private agencies and academia and seek cooperation at every level.

The things I could do on my own and with my staff I did. Those things that required cooperation from others such as the new Secretary of HHS and the new Surgeon General were difficult to arrange and never came off. I then spent the rest of the time talking about those organizations and people who tried to scuttle the workshop but all of this was covered in great detail in the introduction to the three presentations presented here on drunk driving.