

REMARKS BY THE CHAIR OF THE CONFERENCE

By J. Donald Millar, M.D.

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The National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health, part of the Centers for Disease Control, and I am very, very delighted to welcome you again to this Surgeon General's Conference for Agricultural Safety and Health. Is it not a great day in Iowa! It is beautiful out there. And just think how fortunate all the farmers of Iowa are that they get to spend the day outside today. It is wonderful!

I want to thank you again for coming. Is there anybody here from Amesworth or thereabouts? My wife and I drove over and we had a little automobile problem there or about there, and the good folk at the Amesworth Amoco Station were very helpful to us. So I just wanted to say thank you. Any of you from that area drop by and tell them that here is one very grateful Public Health Service officer who appreciates their help.

It is really good to be here. You know, this is the heartland, not only geographically, but in many ways philosophically, because here amidst the good people in the center of our country who still pursue farming as a primary occupation is the reservoir of many traditional American values—things that have made this country the great nation that it is; all the more reason why we should be here again, the second day of the conference, focusing on how to make their quality of life even better and more productive.

I would like you to, at this point, look in your program, if you have it, at page 27;

there begins a full 18 pages of names of people who have made this conference possible. At your leisure look through; as you recognize these people during your time here just say thank you to them personally. There are lots of folks represented, from many walks of life; many from NIOSH, many from outside of NIOSH. It is to them that we owe the success of this conference.

There are two people there whose names you will not see. One is Dr. James Merchant, from the University of Iowa, who has demonstrated great national leadership in this field and who, along with Dr. Pratt, came to Atlanta one day and encouraged this meeting and many other things related to agricultural safety and health. We appreciate that leadership, and we are glad to be responsive to it. The other is one of our speakers this morning, Senator Harkin, who provided legislative encouragement for us to convene in this session.

So you will want to remember these people with gratitude for having initiated—having helped us all to initiate—this conference. The three speakers that I am pleased to introduce this morning all have roots in traditional agricultural states—people who have a good feel for the land. Whether or not they, themselves, may have ever operated behind a plow or on a tractor or whatever, each of them brings to this a sense of the appreciation of human worth that I think is so important in public health. □



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