

*"We must press the search for new knowledge  
... use what we know more effectively"*

Extracts from remarks of the Surgeon General of the Public Health Service at the dedication of the Clinical Center.

The opening of the Clinical Center symbolizes the hope and faith of the American people that the major killing and crippling diseases of this century ultimately will be conquered.

The very nature of these diseases—subtle reactions of the human organism to its biological inheritance, its total environment—makes it clear that clinical and laboratory research will play an increasingly significant role in medical and public health progress for many years to come.

In a sense, we have reached a period of consolidation of forces for a broad attack on chronic diseases—an attack that can be fully successful only after years of intensive research. This means that we must not only press the search for new knowledge, but we must also use what we do know more intensively, more effectively.

The key to chronic disease control today is early diagnosis and treatment. Hundreds of thousands of the people who will die of cancer or heart disease, or who will be permanently disabled by arthritis or neurological disorders, or mental disease, could be aided if their illnesses were detected in the early stages when present methods of treatment are most successful. The first great promise of medical research is to find new and more efficient ways to early diagnosis and treatment. And the second is ultimately to discover means of positive prevention.

In centering attention on the chronic diseases, we will not forget that our knowledge of infectious diseases—particularly the virus infections—is really quite rudimentary, when measured against what must be known if prevention is to be as successful in the whole range of communicable diseases as it now is in a few. We must not forget the interrelation of many acute

infections and chronic disability: the crippling effects of poliomyelitis and encephalitis, for example.

If the Nation's total effort in medical and public health research maintains effective balance and emphasis with respect to all our major problems, the American people can expect advances in human health in the second half of this century as startling as those that have marked the first half.

The Clinical Center will take its place with other major research institutions, private and public, in this long, hard fight.

The Clinical Center, however, is not only a research institution; it is a piece—a large one, it is true—in the kaleidoscope of public health. It is a part of the Public Health Service, and thus a part of the United States Department of Health, Education, and Welfare.

We in the Public Health Service, and our colleagues both inside and outside the Federal Government, have long since recognized the inseparability of science and the society in which it functions. We cannot separate a rheumatic child's illness from his growing mind and body, from his immediate need for schooling, his family's potential need for social service. Nor can we separate the cancer patient's disease from his age, his potential unemployability, or his pension. We cannot separate the crippled workman's paralysis from his chances for rehabilitation and return to gainful employment and happy independence.

The opening of the Clinical Center follows by less than 2 months the establishment of the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare—acts which demonstrate America's nationwide recognition of these relationships. . . .

—LEONARD A. SCHEELE, M. D.