

REMARKS

DEDICATION

RICHARD D. WOOD AMBULATORY CARE CENTER

SEPTEMBER 17, 1989

WHEN I SPOKE AT THE DEDICATION OF THE NEW CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL AND
CHILD GUIDANCE CENTER IN 1974, IT WAS A TIME OF EXTRAORDINARY
EXPECTATION. THE ATMOSPHERE TINGLED WITH EXCITEMENT.

A LARGE CROWD HAD GATHERED FOR THE FESTIVE OCCASION, INCLUDING
PRINCESS MARGARET AND LORD SNOWDON.

WE HAVE NO PRINCESS TODAY, BUT WE DO HAVE DICK WOOD.

BACK IN 1974, THE NEW CHILDREN'S HOSPITAL OF PHILADELPHIA WAS THE
MOST EXPENSIVE BUILDING EVER BUILT IN THE STATE OF PENNSYLVANIA.

THERE WERE SO MANY FLUORESCENT LIGHTS IN THE NEW HOSPITAL, THAT
WHEN WE TURNED OFF HALF OF THEM, WE COULD STILL SEE QUITE WELL.

WE OFFERED THE BEST IN MEDICAL TECHNOLOGY.

WE BOASTED A STAFF SECOND TO NONE.

WE WERE AT THE DAWN OF A NEW ERA.

BUT WE HAD ONE GREAT CONCERN.

THE NEW HOSPITAL HAD FAR MORE BEDS THAN THE OLD ONE.

HOW WOULD WE FILL ALL THE BEDS?

WHERE WOULD THE SICK CHILDREN COME FROM?

FROM WHERE WOULD WE GET REFERRALS?

SOME OF YOU MAY RECALL THAT ON THE OCCASION OF THAT LAST
DEDICATION, IN 1974, I BROUGHT CHARLES DICKENS WITH ME, AND SPOKE
OF THE FAMOUS AUTHOR'S COMMITMENT TO THE RIGHTS OF CHILDREN,
AND OF HIS OWN EFFORTS AS A FUND-RAISER TO HELP CONSTRUCT THE
IN THE ENGLISH-SPEAKING WORLD FIRST CHILDRENS' HOSPITAL, LONDON'S
VENERABLE HOSPITAL FOR SICK CHILDREN, GREAT ORMOND STREET.

I ALSO USED DICKENS' FAMOUS WORDS FROM THE BEGINNING OF A TALE OF TWO CITIES TO DESCRIBE THE WORLD INTO WHICH OUR OWN NEW HOSPITAL WAS BORN:

"IT WAS THE BEST OF TIMES, IT WAS THE WORST OF TIMES. . .

IT WAS THE SEASON OF LIGHT, IT WAS THE SEASON OF DARKNESS,

IT WAS THE SPRING OF HOPE, IT WAS THE WINTER OF DESPAIR..."

I SAID IT WAS THE BEST OF TIMES BECAUSE OF THE MEDICAL EXPERTISE
AND ENGINEERING SKILLS WE POSSESSED.

I SAID IT WAS THE BEST OF TIMES BECAUSE OF THE PACE OF MEDICAL
PROGRESS,

AS I RECALLED MY MEDICAL SCHOOL DAYS WHEN THERE WERE NOT SULFA
DRUGS --MUCH LESS ANTIBIOTICS-- TO COMBAT INFECTION.

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IN 1974 I SAID THAT THE MOST PERPLEXING SURGICAL PROBLEM IN
NEWBORNS WAS A RATHER NEW DISEASE PROCESS KNOWN AS NECROTIZING
ENTEROCOLITIS. IT WAS COMMON THEN ONLY BECAUSE WE NEVER BEFORE
HAD BEEN ABLE TO SALVAGE THESE STRESSED NEWBORNS SO THAT THEY
SURVIVED TO DEVELOPE THE PROBLEM.

AT THAT TIME I WONDERED IF IN 10 YEARS ENTEROCOLITIS MIGHT HAVE
GONE THE WAY OF DIPHTHERIA.

WOULD THAT IT HAD.

WE BEGAN TO SEE THE DROP-OFF OF CASES, BUT WITH THE RISE OF THE
USE OF COCAINE IN PREGNANT WOMEN, THE FUTURE FOR THE INCIDENCE OF
THIS DISEASE LOOKS LESS BRIGHT THAN IT DID IN 1974.

I SAID IT WAS THE BEST OF TIMES BECAUSE OF THE CONVERGENCE OF THE
AIMS OF GOVERNMENT, PEDIATRIC SOCIETIES, AND THE PUBLIC FOR THE
COMPREHENSIVE CARE OF CHILDREN. I THINK HERE WE DID MAKE
PROGRESS.

SOME OF THE THINGS I AM MOST PLEASED ABOUT ARE NOT THE HEADLINE-
GRABBERS WITH WHICH MY NAME HAS BEEN ASSOCIATED. WE NOW HAVE A
TYPE OF COMPREHENSIVE, FAMILY-CENTERED, COMMUNITY-BASED CARE
FOR CHILDREN WITH SPECIAL NEEDS THAT IS SWEEPING ITS WAY ACROSS
THE LAND.

THIS IS MY ACCOMPLISHMENT OF WHICH I AM MOST PROUD, AND IT
STARTED RIGHT HERE IN DECEMBER 1982 WITH A SURGEON GENERAL'S
WORKSHOP ON HANDICAPPED CHILDREN AND THEIR FAMILIES.

I SAID IT WAS THE BEST OF TIMES BECAUSE OF THE PROXIMITY OF THIS
NEW CLINICAL CENTER TO THE SURROUNDING RESEARCH FACILITIES,
AND CERTAINLY THE TRANSFER OF KNOWLEDGE AND TECHNOLOGY HAS
SPEEDED UP.

I SAID IT WAS THE BEST OF TIMES BECAUSE OF THE ENTHUSIASM WE ALL FELT, AN ENTHUSIASM BORN NOT ONLY OF EXPECTATION, BUT ALSO OF A SOLID BASE OF EXPERIENCE.

BUT I ALSO WARNED THAT IT WAS THE WORST OF TIMES.

I SAID IT WAS THE WORST OF TIMES BECAUSE OF THE TENSION BETWEEN ECONOMIC AND DEMOGRAPHIC TRENDS.

MODERN MEDICINE COSTS MORE AND MORE, AS BOTH THE PUBLIC AND THE
PRACTITIONERS CLAMORED FOR THE MOST SOPHISTICATED EQUIPMENT AND
SERVICES.... AT A TIME WHEN GOVERNMENT PENNY-PINCHING HAD
REPLACED GENEROUS GRANTS.

AND AS COSTS SOARED, WE FEARED A PRECIPITOUS DECLINE IN PATIENT
POPULATION.

IN 1974 THE BABY BOOM HAD COME TO AN END.

THE CONTRACEPTIVE PILL AND THE RECENT SUPREME COURT DECISION
FAVORING ABORTION HAD LED TO A BIRTH RATE ONLY HALF OF WHAT IT
HAD BEEN FIVE YEARS EARLIER.

THE FLIGHT TO THE SUBURBS, TO SUBURBAN SHOPPING MALLS,
TO SUBURBAN HOSPITALS, RAISED EVEN MORE QUESTIONS ABOUT THE FATE
OF CENTER-CITY INSTITUTIONS.

HOW WOULD WE FILL ALL THOSE BEDS?

WE WERE CONCERNED ENOUGH EVEN TO EMPLOY MARKETING TECHNIQUES TO
ATTRACT PATIENTS TO THIS MAGNIFICENT HOSPITAL.

AND NOW LOOK AT US.

ONLY 15 YEARS LATER.

EXPANDING.

DEDICATING A NEW BUILDING.

THE ECONOMIC AND DEMOGRAPHIC TRENDS THAT CONCERNED US HAVE CONTINUED IN A DIRECTION THAT SHOULD HAVE BEEN DETRIMENTAL TO THIS HOSPITAL.

THE COST OF MEDICAL CARE HAS RISEN, AND CONTINUES TO RISE AT A HIGHER AND MORE ACCELERATED RATE THAN OTHER SERVICES.

THE PAST EIGHT YEARS CERTAINLY DID NOT POUR GOVERNMENT MONEY INTO PEDIATRIC CAUSES.

WE BROKE EVEN ON THE BIRTH RATE.

HOW DID YOU FILL ALL THOSE BEDS?

YOU FILLED THEM BECAUSE OF THE MAGNET THIS HOSPITAL HAS BECOME.

A MAGNET BECAUSE OF ITS STAFF -- THEIR EXPERTISE AND
ACCOMPLISHMENTS.

A MAGNET BECAUSE OF THE STEADY QUALITY OF THE HOUSE STAFF AND THE
HOSPITAL'S CONTINUED ABILITY TO ATTRACT BRIGHT AND CARING YOUNG
MEN AND WOMEN.

TO QUOTE THE INSCRIPTION ON THE CHILDRENS' HOSPITAL MEDAL,

"QUIPPE QUI NUMQUAM IMMEMOR ESSET PUERORUM -- YOU WERE NEVER
UNMINDFUL OF CHILDREN."

NOW WE ARE HERE TO DEDICATE A NEW BUILDING, --

BUT MORE THAN THAT WE ARE HERE TO DEDICATE

PEDIATRIC :

THE RICHARD D. WOOD_A AMBULATORY CARE CENTER.

AND, DICK, AS I SAID WHEN YOU DEDICATED THE C. EVERETT KOOP

I'M SO

COMPREHENSIVE SURGICAL CENTER, ~~AREN'T YOU~~ GLAD IT'S NOT A

MEMORIAL! I KNOW YOU FEEL THAT WAY TO DAY!

RICHARD D. WOOD HAS BEEN THE QUINTESSENTIAL HOSPITAL MANAGER.

I SEEM TO RECALL MORE THAN ONE FINANCIAL CRISIS IN THE OLD

CHILDRENS' HOSPITAL. AND ON EACH OF THOSE OCCASIONS I REMEMBER

THAT IT WAS DICK WOOD WHO ASSUMED HANDS-ON CARE TO BRING US OUT

OF OUR DIFFICULTIES.

IN ONE SUCH CRISIS I REMEMBER THAT DICK ESTABLISHED A COMMAND POST, FRIDAY AFTERNOONS AT THE RITTENHOUSE CLUB, WHERE SEVERAL OF US WOULD GATHER WITH HIM TO ASSESS THE PROGRESS OF THE PAST WEEK, AND PLAN THE NEXT WEEK. THAT KIND OF INTEREST, TENACITY, AND SKILL NOT ONLY ENDEARED DICK WOOD TO ALL OF US, BUT ALSO SUSTAINED THE INSTITUTION.

HOSPITAL TRUSTEES ALWAYS UNDERSTAND PROBLEMS OF MAINTENANCE OF THE BUILDING AND SERVICING OF DEBTS, BUT THEY DO NOT ALWAYS SHOW THE SAME DEPTH OF UNDERSTANDING ABOUT THE NEEDS OF PATIENTS.

DICK WOOD UNDERSTOOD IT ALL.

IN THE NEARLY 35 YEARS I WAS SURGEON-IN-CHIEF I WAS NEVER
DISAPPOINTED BY HIM WHEN I WENT TO HIM TO REQUEST AN EXPENDITURE
OR A CHANGE IN POLICY THAT TOUCHED THE LIVES OF CHILDREN.

DICK AND I GO BACK A LONG WAY.

AND, OVER THE YEARS I ALWAYS FEARED THE DAY WHEN HE WOULD LOSE
INTEREST, AND ~~HE~~ WOULD LEAVE US.

I EXPRESSED THAT CONCERN WHEN ~~WE~~ DEDICATED THE WOOD LOUNGE.

HIS RESPONSE WAS, "I'LL STAY AS LONG AS I'M HAVING FUN."

SO, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN, FRIENDS OF THE HOSPITAL, RESIDENTS AND
FELLOWS, MEMBERS OF THE STAFF, ADMINISTRATORS, AND VOLUNTEERS. .

PLEASE KEEP THIS A FUN PLACE FOR DICK WOOD.

THANK YOU

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