

Schweitzer Award
March, 1985

In conferring the Albert Schweitzer International Award for Medicine, you honor an extraordinary and dedicated public health team comprised of more than 70 nationalities who set aside personal ambition, interrupted careers which were otherwise directed, and immersed themselves day and night to achieve a goal which few believed could ever be realized - the eradication from the world of history's most devastating disease. You honor their spouses who permitted them to so devote their energies. I am privileged to receive this honor on their behalf - and should like to salute, in particular, three who are with us tonight - my earliest colleague in this great campaign, now Assistant Surgeon General Rear Admiral Donald Millar and his wife Joan and my wife - Nana.

The eradication of smallpox, significant though it may have been, represents but a stop in a longer and still formidable journey to achieve a quality of health and life in which all can share. It is that for which Albert Schweitzer himself so diligently labored. It is that for which those of us committed to public health have devoted our professional careers. Although often working in the anonymity of the larger organization to which we belong, you honor us all tonight and for this we are all profoundly grateful.

I accept this coveted honor with gratitude and accept the implicit challenge for us all to go forth and, with passion and conviction, join with colleagues across the world in the challenges still before us.