

Introduction to the series of speeches Post. SG yrs.

Generic Speech for use in
1990 – 1991

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For at least a year and a half after I left the Office of Surgeon General in October of 1989, I was feeling my way along as a lecturer and as a post-governmental employee entrepreneur available for consultation, lectures, ground-breaking, award-giving, etc., etc. Before I left office I had wondered if there was a life after Surgeon General, in as much as that had been such a full and fulfilling career; I was told I could write my own ticket. Therefore, I expected a lot, but I was not nearly ready for the overwhelming number of invitations to do “something”, some of which are mentioned above.

It seemed I was a hot ticket in those days, and before I signed a contract with an agent of my own, I not only received a number of invitations to speak for organizations, societies, etc., but was tempted to do the same by agencies with whom I had no previous contact. Even so, it will surprise the reader that for the first two years after leaving office, I averaged, on mail days, 65 requests per day to do “something”. My son, Allen, who was helping me with speech writing at the same time I was writing my memoirs, Koop: America’s Family Doctor and I tried several experiments. One was to write a series of short commentaries of major health issues of the day and by the fall of 1990, I had accumulated 359 pages, each of which we tried to make a complete statement in itself, (in order that we could add or delete pages without breaking the train of thought). For each subject at hand they varied from 3 to 26 pages. Although, in the long run, we abandoned this, it served well in those early days and there follows this introduction the first such iteration, 107 pages long, from which I would choose from anywhere to 100 – 130 pages for the usual 50 minute lecture. The reason that the number of pages might seem so high is that my speeches were presented for my reading in 16 point type and I tried not to have the text run much below the middle of the page so that I could take it in at a glance, look back at the audience, and not appear to be paying excessive time reading a speech. Each page had a key code in the upper right-hand corner and the pages were numbered consecutively. So that sometimes I prepared a lecture by reading through the generic material and just writing the sequence of the pages I would use in the lecture. However, the user of this archive might view this effort, there is following this introduction one such example. The generic presentation is followed by two actual speeches that I gave as the Larson Lecture to the Annual Meeting of the American Hospital Association on 7/30/90 and the Lexington Speech given on _____.

For many years that I lectured frequently after I had left government, I used a large folio with 3 to 5 – perhaps 10 on occasion – pages covering specific subjects. When I had to prepare a lecture on short notice I relied on pulling the right pages out of this folio and getting them adjusted in the right order for a sensible presentation I leaned heavily on that source I preparing this lecture.

There follows the interpretation of the codes indicating specific topics

ER --- Emergency Room

AG --- Aging

CAN --- Canadian Health care System

Pov --- Poverty

Pv --- Prevention

3 rdp --- Third Party Interface with dpt

dpt --- Doctor/patient relationship

F --- food

Rtn --- rationing health care

A --- AIDS

S --- Smoking

D --- Drugs

AD --- Advertising

INT --- International Health

V --- Violence

DBT – Medical Student debt

AL --- Alcohol

OB --- Malpractice in Obstetrics