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Gordon H. Schrotenboer American Dental Association

JOHN COADY: It is my pleasure to welcome you to the Association headquarters for this Conference on Clinical Caries Trials. I am told that the last time this conference was convened here was 15 years ago in 1968, and that the first conference was held in 1955. Your deliberations at this conference, as with those in the past, will have a profound effect on the dental practice of the future. The declining caries rate is glad news to us in our constant effort to improve the oral health of the American people. At the same time, it has meant very real changes in the way we as dentists manage our professional lives. As the caries rate continues to decline, we will see even more substantial change in the way our profession functions. The eradication of dental caries, once a mere hope for the profession of dentistry, moves steadily toward becoming a reality. This is due in large part to your efforts. You have our congratulations for your past endeavors and our best wishes on your deliberations here this week. Thank you.

JAMES CARLOS: I am delighted to be here. I would like to thank the ADA for their willingness, once again, to sponsor this meeting, and thank John Coady personally, and of course to thank Gordon Schrotenboer. He is remarkable. We thank you, Gordon, for your efforts. Certainly the same thanks are due to Neal Chilton, who worked with Gordon. Neal, in fact, was the person who stimulated this meeting. If any of you have read his latest edition of his textbook*, you will know what I think of Neal. The best cross-section of people that has ever been assembled in the area of dental clinical trials — or perhaps in clinical trials in general, for that matter - is here today. We obviously have academics represented, government, to be sure, industry, and, of course, international research. That's the kind of understanding that we in the caries program have tried to encourage since we began all this about 12 years ago. It is a good example, I think, of the success in trying to get everybody involved in the problems of preventing dental caries.

It occurred to me that one of the reasons I am here at this particular meeting is because I had the good fortune quite a while ago to encounter a person who has also made tremendous contributions to the effort of improving the quality of dental caries clinical trials. I am speaking of Professor John Fertig. He is a remarkable teacher, a great friend and supporter of dental research. I would like to take this opportunity to thank him publicly.

Last night I did a survey of a small sample of those attending, and I find that there are two recurring interesting issues which I hope we will be able to get some insight into while we are here, in addition to the formal papers which appear on the program. The first issue is that no one trusts anyone else's data. I don't know why that is so, but it seems quite prevalent. I think there are some real problems there which I hope will be aired when we talk one to another about our results. The other issue is not one exact-

ly of clinical trials but closely allied, because all of us are equally interested in epidemiology. The issue is that everybody agrees that dental caries is declining, but I don't agree with that. Everyone agrees that dental caries is declining in the industrialized countries, but there is tremendous difference of opinion about the reasons. I hope that's another thing we will be able to talk about while we are here.

Once again, my warm greetings to everybody. We are delighted to have you here. We appreciate the efforts of the ADA, of Gordon Schrotenboer, and of Neal Chilton, and wish you a very profitable conference.

NEAL W. CHILTON: Working with Gordon has been a pleasure, and I want to thank him publicly for all his fine efforts in arranging this Conference in addition to all his many activities as Assistant Executive Director of the Association.

The Task Force on Design and Analysis in Dental and Oral Research is a co-sponsor of this conference. Every member of the Task Force is here with the exception of Dr. André Varma, who is now in India as an international consultant to WHO, and his paper will be read by John Fertig. I also want to pay tribute to my teacher and good friend since 1945, Professor John Fertig. Without him, most of the work I have done in this field would never have been accomplished, and without his leadership the Task Force would not be in existence. I want to thank John formally and publicly.

The Task Force started originally as one of four task forces in the second caries conference sponsored by the American Dental Association and the Division of Dental Health of the USPHS in 1968. A similar conference on clinical trials in periodontal disease, under the sponsorship of the New Jersey State Health Department and the Division of Dental Health of the USPHS, was held at the Sugar Loaf Conference Center of Temple University in Philadelphia. The Proceedings were published as Supplement 14, Journal of Periodontal Research, in 1974.

Since 1974, the Task Force activities have been sponsored by grants from various industrial concerns. We are currently sponsored by (alphabetically) Beecham Products, Colgate-Palmolive, Johnson & Johnson, Procter & Gamble, Warner Lambert, and the William Wrigley, Jr., Company. I would like to thank them all for their continued support.

The conference will be conducted in the following way: Following each formal presentation, there will be a formal discussion. All of these papers have been made available to you so that you could read them in advance to allow for good informal discussion from the floor. After each session of the formal presentations and discussions, discussion will be led by pre-arranged panels, listed in the program. After this, discussion will be open from the floor. We have arranged it so that there will be more than adequate time for complete discussion. All discussants are please asked to identify themselves.

I'd like, again, on behalf of the Task Force, to welcome all of the participants and observers and hope that you enjoy the meeting and have a very profitable time.

^{*}Design and Analysis in Dental and Oral Research, 2nd ed., New York: Praeger, 1982.