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IN RESPONSE TO THE AIDS CRISIS: RECORDS OF THE NATIONAL COMMISSION ON ACQUIRED IMMUNE DEFICIENCY SYNDROME, 1983-1994



Briefing books, hearing and meeting transcripts, reports, and press clippings document the activities of the National Commission on Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome from 1983-1994

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Detailed Description:

The National Commission on Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome was an independent body created in 1989 by federal statute (Public Law 100-607). The mission of the National Commission was to advise Congress and the President on the development of "a consistent national policy" concerning the HIV epidemic. The statute created the Commission for a period of up to four years, which expired on September 3, 1993.

The National Commission was preceded by the Presidential Commission on the Human Immunodeficiency Virus Epidemic, which was established on June 24, 1987, by Executive Order 12601. The Presidential Commission held over 45 days of hearings and site visits in preparation of their final report to the President, which was completed on June 27, 1988. One of the recommendations of the final report was the development of a national commission on AIDS to continue their work.

The National Commission consisted of fifteen members including five appointed by the Senate; five by the House; two by President George W. Bush Sr.; and the secretaries of Health and Human Services, Defense, and the Veterans Administration. The Commission accomplished its mission through numerous hearings and site visits.

The Commission's hearings covered the following topic concerning AIDS: healthcare, treatment, and international aspects of the HIV epidemic; Federal, State, and Local responsibilities; the Southern California epidemic; social and human issues; Executive and Legislative branch issues; current research and clinical trials; HIV epidemic in the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico; African American communities; Pediatric and Adolescent HIV; Lesbian, Gay, and Bisexual communities among Asians, Asian Americans, and Pacific Islanders; Women and HIV disease and civil rights; religious communities response; and risks of transmission in healthcare settings.

Site visits included Southern California community based organizations in order to observe their response to the epidemic. Other site visits also included the homeless in New York City, Newark, and Jersey City; AIDS in the rural communities of Waycross, Albany, and Macon, Georgia; HIV and AIDS in New York City correctional facilities; the epidemic in the Commonwealth of Puerto Rico; regional responses in Belle Glade and Miami, Florida; and the Native American Communities of Oklahoma, Minnesota, South Dakota, Arizona, and New Mexico.

During its tenure the Commission produced fifteen reports plus analytical and policy statements on a number of issues. *AIDS: An Expanding Tragedy*, the Commission's final report was issued in June 1993. The final report discusses the future of the AIDS epidemic in America and established two main recommendations on the appropriate response. The first recommendation was that leaders at all levels must speak out about AIDS to their constituencies. Secondly, we must develop a clear well-articulated national plan for confronting AIDS. The steps necessary to meet these guidelines are outlined by the Commission in *Mobilizing America's Response to AIDS*, which was sent directly to the President.

Briefing books, hearing and meeting transcripts, reports, and press clippings document the activities of the National Commission on Acquired Immune Deficiency Syndrome (NCAIDS). The majority of the collection consists of NCAIDS briefing books, and hearing and meeting transcripts. Series I contains hearing transcripts from the Commission's predecessor, the Presidential Commission on the Human Immunodeficiency Virus Epidemic (1987-1988); Series II contains the work conducted by NCAIDS. In Series III, the collection includes various topical reports on AIDS published by external agencies. There are no notes or correspondence in this collection and all materials appear here in published form. In addition, the Commission's report *Mobilizing America's Response to AIDS*, is also not included within this collection but can be found in the National Library of Medicine's General Collection. The bulk of the collection spans the years 1987 to early 1992.

The collection comprises four series: Presidential Commission on the Human Immunodeficiency Virus Epidemic, 1987-1988; Briefings and Transcripts of Hearings and

Meetings, 1989-1992; Press Coverage and Reports, 1989-1993; and Reports on AIDS from External Institutions and Government Agencies, 1983-1992.

Of special interest is the Commission's final report *AIDS: An Expanding Tragedy*, which serves as a summary of the Commission's activities and includes a detailed chronology of its activities and provides an extensive list of all hearings, site visits, reports, and publications related to the Commission.

Index Terms

These terms are indexed in the National Library of Medicine's online catalog LocatorPlus. Researchers wishing to find related materials should search the catalog using these terms:

- Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome
- African Americans
- Homosexuality
- Human Immunodeficiency Virus
- Public Health

**N.B. This description is from the History of Medicine's finding aid for this collection.*