

THE ECONOMIC CLUB

O F W A S H I N G T O N, D. C.

**Excerpts from the Signature Event featuring Dr. Anthony Fauci,
Director, National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases**

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We have the tools to essentially end the AIDS epidemic by treating the people who are infected. We found out a few years ago . . . that if you treat somebody who's HIV infected and you bring the level of virus to below a detectable level in their blood, you decrease by 96 percent the likelihood that they will transmit their infection to somebody else. Then, a few years ago, we showed by a number of studies that if you take a person who's at high risk . . . and you give them a single pill a day . . . you can decrease by 98 percent or more the likelihood that they would get infected.

Tuberculosis is an interesting disease, because people forget about tuberculosis. It's an ancient disease. But it is still in the developing world one of the worst killers. . . . One third of the world's population, over 2 billion people, are infected with tuberculosis. . . . Each year there are over 8 million new cases of tuberculosis and 1.6 million deaths. So there are more deaths from tuberculosis than there are from malaria, from HIV/AIDS.

. . . I really am a bear on colonoscopies, as well as skin examinations, because if there are two diseases that early intervention makes a huge difference is the skin examination of picking up a melanoma before it becomes metastatic, and colon cancers almost all start off as polyps that then get a little bit dysplastic, that then become cancerous and then could spread. So that usually takes place over years and years. If you do a colonoscopy and you have a completely clean colon, the chances of next year you coming up with a colon cancer that's a problem, that you can't do anything about, are almost zero because it takes so many years for it to develop. So if you intermittently get a colonoscopy, you'll be able to pick it up before you have a problem.