In a 1995 speech at the National Cancer Summit, I proposed a 10-point action program to speed up the War on Cancer. Some of these points and other similar proposals have been incorporated in the "Roadmap for Medical Research" announced last fall by the National Institutes of Health. This roadmap, along with recent changes at the Food and Drug Administration, are positive steps. But much more needs to be done to optimize the infrastructure of medical research and treatment.

That's why this issue of the *Milken Institute Review* is important. It covers life-and-death matters that will affect each of you and your families, and it shows how you can become involved through a new organization, the Center for Accelerating Medical Solutions (CAMS). Recognizing that all of us have or will someday have a serious disease, CAMS is focused on what it will take to cure those diseases *in your lifetime.*

Despite some important breakthroughs, progress in medicine has not matched the advances in other areas of science and technology. Telescopes in space have brought us closer to unraveling the origins of the universe even as the genome project has brought us closer to unraveling the mysteries of the cell. The cost of sequencing a gene has fallen from more than $100 million in 1974 to less than $6. Today, the cell phones we carry in our pockets contain the data equivalent of the world's largest computers of the 1970s. A child's toy contains more processing power than the lunar module that landed in 1969.

In our economic life, technology has helped bring home ownership within the reach of 70 percent of Americans. More than half of us own stock. Productivity has leapt forward – a factory worker earns enough in a single day to fly across the country, a fact that would have astounded those of our forebears who risked their lives and fortunes for months in covered wagons.

In 1900, one of every five American babies died within five years. Wealth and power afforded no protection against tragedy – 16 U.S. presidents have lost a child in infancy. But in the last 100 years, our progress against infant mortality, infectious diseases and cardiovascular disorders has extended life expectancy by a remarkable 54 percent. There has also been progress against cancer. For example, cure rates for childhood leukemia have improved from about 5 percent to more than 80 percent and new treatments for testicular cancer are often highly effective. Just ask five-time Tour de France winner Lance Armstrong.

Unfortunately, progress against many of our most serious diseases has been slower. An American man still has a one-in-two chance of developing cancer; a woman's chances are one-in-three. Alzheimer's, diabetes, kidney diseases, AIDS and other serious conditions continue to devastate individuals and families.

Everyone focused on finding better treat-

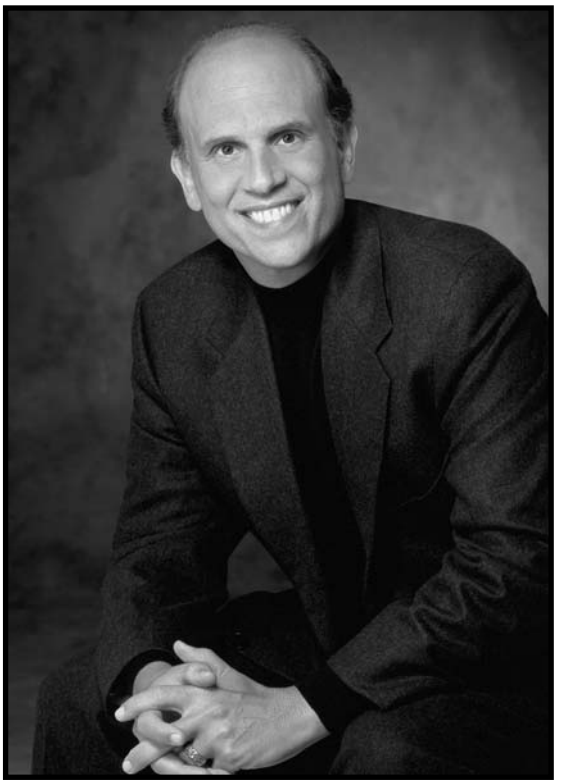
ments and cures – patient advocacy groups, scientists and doctors at medical research centers, biotechnology and pharmaceutical company researchers, government officials and foundation executives – sincerely wants to strike down deadly conditions faster. The problem is that they face a maze of conflicting incentives, often-outdated regulations and other roadblocks to progress.

Thirty-two years ago, when I first began to focus on medical research programs, the conventional view was that if you poured enough money into research aimed at a single medical problem, you'd eventually find a single solution. This is the "magic bullet" theory. Penicillin had been a magic bullet for bacterial infections; the Salk vaccine for polio. Surely, it seemed then, a pill to cure breast cancer was just around the corner.

Over the past generation, the medical research community has become far more sophisticated in understanding the cellular basis of disease. Advances in molecular biology, genomics, imaging, information processing and other areas of science have helped us to formulate the great questions of medicine with growing precision. Having interacted with thousands of dedicated physicians and scientists over three decades, I'm convinced we have the talent and other resources to begin finding answers to those questions. But the recent death from cancer of *Wall Street Journal* editor emeritus and CAMS board member Robert Bartley, one of the great journalists of our time, is just one more reminder that we're not finding the answers fast enough.

With its non-partisan focus on human capital and economic incentives, the Milken Institute is ideally positioned to approach this issue creatively. Last year, we established the Center for Accelerating Medical Solutions under the auspices of the Institute with the goal of developing a better approach to solving medical problems. While CAMS will not conduct medical research, it will make concrete proposals on how we can better coordinate worldwide medical resources, improve medical education, accelerate the application of technology to medicine, eliminate unnecessarily restrictive regulation, move products to the marketplace faster, recruit more of the brightest students to research careers, increase participation of patients in clinical trials, encourage public and private investment in developing new treatments, and much more.

Information about how you can become involved with CAMS is at www.fastercures.org.



Michael Milken

Michael Milken
Chairman