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NEWS Letter

NEW MEXICO MEDICAL SOCIETY • 211 First National Bank • Albuquerque, New Mexico

May 31, 1965

THERE IS NO YESTERDAY

The hopes and dreams and wishes lay quiet, battered into reluctant submission. Courageously, we must extend our horizons beyond the smoke and debris of the conflict. It should now be obvious to all that we are in a struggle greater than our own provincial interest and one not involving control of methods, but one involving control of ideas. Idealism slumbered too long and the awakening is painful.

What is victory and who was vanquished? No one can truthfully decide at this moment. A conflict does exist and we have been mere pawns in the battle, yet who can rightfully not deny that from the ashes may rise a medical phoenix of great brilliance. Freed of the shackles of false imagery and intellectual isolation, perhaps we can now begin the construction of a new foundation with a hopeful future.

Today is cold. The physician begins the long road ahead not unmindful of the problems of social change and scientific progress. The objective of better care never wavers. Approaching realism in a nuclear age it becomes abundantly clear that two facets of our activities must be greatly improved and enlarged upon. The areas of communication and political activity can no longer be armchair pastimes and an occasional weekend indulgence by the dedicated few. To this proposal we are directing our immediate efforts and long range plans.

Communications are not keeping pace with the growing complexities of our Medical Society. With this in mind, I have asked two Society stalwarts to guide and reshape this gray zone in which there is now much unrest and concern.

Dr. Omar Legant will undertake the Herculean task of establishing through the Public Relations Committee the rapport necessary to better understanding and purpose both within and outside of our ranks. Apathy and ignorance are the seeds from which are grown the fruits of indifference and mediocrity. It must be made evidently clear to the laity and public officialdom that the practicing physician must ultimately assume the responsibility of medical care. Bureaucratic interference can only invite disaster. Overcoming current attitudes presents a great challenge.

Dr. R. C. Derbyshire has assumed the editorship of our NEWSletter and

will attempt to bring the professional perspective to it that he has so successfully achieved with the National Federation Bulletin. Through this medium must come the expression and opinions of ideas, knowledge and principles garnered from the vast intellectual wealth of membership.

However diligent and industriously we may pursue our purpose, all is lost if we ignore the political arena. There is only one serious threat that can endanger our great country, and that is for its people to forsake their rights as citizens. Only a decade ago, it was heresy to believe that medicine and politics would become intimately associated. It did happen, and we can ill afford the luxury of self recrimination.

Political activity denotes many concepts to many people. To the physician it must mean striving for good government. He should participate actively in the party of his choice and contribute in the capacity for which he is best inclined. Certainly, there should be unity of purpose, but freedom for individuality of action. If we do not labor for good government, rest assured that bad government will labor for us. Lastly, selfish motivation can only hasten our complete demise.

The future rests with us. As citizens and as doctors we must strive for and anticipate when prudent men may once again resolve differences through mutual constructive exchange for the benefit of all.

- R. P. Beaudette, M.D.
President, N.M.M.S.

ON THE EATING OF WORDS

In recent years, along with many of our colleagues, we have repeatedly stated that the day of the General Medical Meeting is past. This has been mainly because of the consistently poor attendance at the scientific sessions of the New Mexico Medical Society. Many program committees have been disheartened, after months of hard work, to see 30 people attend a lecture given by an outstanding authority; or 20 people being vainly exhorted by the moderator to ask questions of a panel.

(Continued on Page 2)

ON THE EATING OF WORDS (cont'd.)

The recent meeting of the Rocky Mountain Medical Conference in conjunction with the State Medical Society in Santa Fe has forced us to eat our words which we are glad to do. Despite the disappointing total registration of physicians, those who did come attended the scientific meetings enthusiastically and, with the exception of the Saturday morning session which should be eliminated, consistently crowded the lecture hall. During many years of interest in such matters we have never seen anything like it.

For an explanation we turn to several factors not the least of which was the excellence of the speakers. Also important is the experiment of the Program Committee. This year it was decided to devote each day to a separate topic; hence Wednesday was Psychiatry Day, Thursday was devoted to Medicine, Friday to Surgery. It was correctly assumed that, while many would not remain for the entire program, each day would bring a new influx of members and guests, interested in the particular topic. Many of our past programs have been hodgepodes of subjects with a paper on brain transplants followed by one on infant diarrhea and another on the correct method of nailing a hip. These obvious attempts to satisfy everyone pleased no one.

We believe that the compartmentalized meeting is worthy of further consideration and recommend it to future program committees. Furthermore the program must contain a sprinkling of prominent names regardless of how stimulating the young associate professors prove to be.

But now we are assailed by a dreadful doubt. Could it be that the scientific zeal of our members was accounted for by the vagaries of Santa Fe's mountain climate and the thick layer of hail stones on the golf course? We think not.

- R. C. D.

CAN WE HAVE IT BOTH WAYS?

Opponents of the current medicare bill thought that they had scored a victory of sorts when they persuaded the House of Representatives to exclude the services of radiologists, pathologists, psychiatrists and anesthesiologists from hospital services. But the fight has only begun; the American Medical Association finds itself bitterly opposed by the American Hospital Association and other organizations.

The American College of Pathology, siding with the American Medical Association, stated in part, "The practice of pathology, radiology, anesthesiology and physical medicine are branches of medicine just as are surgery, general practice and internal medicine.

- - - The services of these physicians are not hospital services and do not belong in that portion of the Bill solely designed to offer hospital benefits." Isn't this a sharp departure from customs and practices of many years' standing? Pathologists and radiologists in particular, although they have had a variety of agreements with hospitals, have consistently had some type of salary or percentage arrangement whereby they were assured of excellent incomes and minimal competition. Many physicians in other fields have viewed with alarm such contracts and have cried out in vain against the corporate practice of medicine by the hospitals.

To bring the problem closer to home, several years ago the Attorney General of New Mexico stated that such practices were illegal but his ruling was consigned to oblivion because he recommended remedial legislation which would have legalized the wrong. At that time obviously no one wanted to rock the boat.

We can cite innumerable instances of the stifling of competition through contracts between certain specialists and hospitals obviously to the advantage of both. But now suddenly the so-called hospital based specialists proclaim their desire to compete in the market place as do other physicians. Their change of heart is admirable if late. Regardless of the explanation we are willing to ascribe lofty motives to them and we are sure that state and county societies applaud the fact that now all physicians, regardless of specialties, are in favor of free enterprise and are opposed to the practice of medicine by the hospitals.

On the other hand, another type of hospital practice of medicine is becoming steadily more prevalent; that is the hiring of physicians to staff emergency rooms and the employment of "house doctors" to carry out other undesirable if less onerous duties. At first, confined to the larger cities, this practice is now spreading to smaller hospitals, physicians having thrown up their hands in dismay at the monsters they have helped create in the form of ever more unmanageable emergency rooms. Many hospitals do not conceal the fact that they pay salaries to such physicians who must be licensed unless they are participants in approved training programs. True, in many cases, the members of the hospital staff are so careful to safeguard their prerogatives that they impose such restrictions on the emergency room physician that he is no more than a receiving officer whose judgment is trusted only after dark and at other inconvenient times. But his services are still being sold by the hospital whether profitably or not.

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CAN WE HAVE IT BOTH WAYS? (Cont'd.)

So the medical profession finds itself in the paradoxical position of suddenly proclaiming the independence of a group of specialists, by long established custom tied to the hospitals and on the other hand encouraging the practice of medicine by hospitals by relegation of emergencies to hirelings, many with mediocre professional attainments at best. President Donovan Ward of the American Medical Association recently told the Senate Finance Committee, "All (emphasis ours) physicians want to be responsible to their patients to the limit of their competence; they cannot be restricted by decisions of non-medical personnel on what services should and should not be performed in medical facilities."

Is it possible that the medical profession has actually developed a split personality? A simpler explanation is that we want the best of everything which means having it both ways as far as hospital practice of medicine is concerned.

- R. C. D.

ORGANIZATIONAL NEWS AND NOTES

The clinical program of the Rocky Mountain Medical Conference and New Mexico Medical Society May 12-15, was a huge success. Never have we heard so many compliments regarding a clinical program. The only disappointment was the small registration - 201 physicians.

Actions of the Delegates on May 11 were as follows:

- * 1. Renewed the employment agreements of Mr. Howard Houk, Legal Counsel, and Mr. Bob Reid, Public Relations Counsel.
- * 2. Approved the audit of Peat, Marwick, Mitchell & Co. which revealed an operating profit of \$1,435.22, and approved a budget for 1 April, 1965 to 31 March, 1966 which anticipates a surplus of \$1,784.65.
- * 3. Disapproved of a request from a voluntary health agency to have an insert in each issue of the Newsletter.
- * 4. Approved Drs. James V. Russell and Morris Stark, Albuquerque, for emeritus membership by virtue of retirement.
- * 5. Refused to change the 13-year old policy of not refunding any portion of the State dues when a member moves to another state to practice.

6. Reappointed Marcus Smith, M.D., Santa Fe, New Mexico Scientific Editor to the Rocky Mountain Medical Journal.

7. Requested the President to appoint a committee to work with the New Mexico Academy of Pediatrics in considering Project "Head-Start".

8. Directed that the 8 delinquent members be notified that they will have until July 1 to pay or make arrangements to pay current dues or be expelled from membership.

9. Sent a telegram to administrators of all New Mexico hospitals expressing displeasure and opposition to the American Hospital Association's efforts to include the services of radiologists, pathologists, anesthesiologists and physiatrists in Title 1 of HR 6675; that we deplore the actions of some administrators in New Mexico in making their support known of this amendment without prior consultation with their medical staffs.

10. A proposed amendment to Article VII, Sec. 1 of the Constitution to allow each Councilor District to elect its Councilor did not obtain the 2/3 majority to pass.

11. The Grievance Committee Report was amended by requesting each County Society to have a program periodically to discuss the work of its Board of Censors, Grievance Committee or equivalent body; a review of the Principles of Ethics and such pertinent documents as the News Media Code.

12. The Delegates approved of the inclusion of a voluntary non-deductible contribution to independent political action committees (NEMPAC and AMPAC) on the Society's annual dues-billing statement.

13. Regarding the two resolutions from Bernalillo and Santa Fe Counties concerning "open consultation" with Osteopaths, the following resolution was finally passed:

"That the members of the New Mexico Medical Society be permitted to communicate with Doctors of Osteopathy when the medical welfare of the patient requires it for the acquisition of clinical data only, recognizing that this is not to be construed as a medical consultation."

14. All members will receive a copy of the new Abused Child Law and Autopsy Consent Law, with an explanatory summary of each as a result of the Delegates' approval of the Legislative Committee Report. This Report

ORGANIZATIONAL NEWS (cont'd.)

* also requested the Mental Health Com-
* mittee to prepare an informational
* brochure containing recommendations
* for handling of reported abused children
* from the medical standpoint for all
* district attorneys.

* 15. The Delegates approved of the
* State Society's participation in the
* Vaccination Assistance Project of DPH.
* The State Society's name will appear
* with the DPH on the Birth Certificate
* Maintenance Program which is being
* instituted. All children are to be
* immunized by private physicians and/or
* DPH. In the case of indigent patients,
* private physicians are urged to pro-
* ceed with such immunization, the DPH
* being requested to furnish vaccines
* without cost.

* 16. A request to have the N.M.D.P.H.
* administer the Kerr-Mills Law rather
* than the N.M.D.P.W. was approved by
* the Delegates. The Delegates disap-
* proved of the creation of a drug
* formulary for the DPW.

* 17. The Delegates voted that each
* physician should be aware of the pro-
* per prescription writing, and if the
* prescription does not state the fre-
* quency of refill, the maximum time
* during which it may be refilled, or
* a clear statement that it may not be
* refilled, then some discretion is
* left with the pharmacist who is often
* under pressure.

* 18. The Delegates concurred in a
* request for the Mental Health Commit-
* tee to develop a program with pro-
* fessional assistance from the UNM
* Medical School to sponsor psychia-
* tric seminars for non-psychiatrist
* physicians.

* 19. A resolution from Grant County
* regarding physicians dealing directly
* with DPW patients for services ren-
* dered and not looking to DPW for
* remuneration, beginning 1 July, 1965,
* was disapproved. The President of
* the Society is to write DPW the
* strong feelings of the Society regard-
* ing high-handed methods of policy
* changes.

* 20. A new committee, New Mexico
* Medical Society Fee Committee, will
* be created to consider requests from
* all agencies for a fee schedule for
* this Society. This Committee's first
* task is to negotiate a schedule with
* the V.A. before 1 Oct., 1965.

* 21. The Delegates approved of pro-
* posal for Blue Shield to discontinue
* publishing a fee schedule. Physicians

will be paid for their usual and cus-
* tomary fees, and fees must fall with-
* in the range of usual and customary
* charges of physicians in the same
* community for the high level Blue
* Shield program. For patients who
* have the low level program and do
* not qualify under the program's in-
* come limits, Blue Shield will pay
* 75% of billed charges for surgical
* and medical services and 80% for
* radiology and pathology services.

22. The Delegates rescinded a
* 1960 resolution which asked the UNM
* Medical School to establish a chair
* of general practice, and substituted
* a motion stating that the establish-
* ment of a chair of general practice
* was not feasible and because it is
* the expressed intention of the school
* to produce well educated practi-
* tioners who are fully qualified for
* service in our communities, thus in
* effect paralleling the previous
* resolution.

23. The New Mexico Editor to the
* Rocky Mountain Medical Journal,
* Marcus Smith, M.D., was requested to
* convey to the Journal the desire of
* the State Society to be responsible
* for one complete issue per year, and
* that Dr. Smith be requested to solicit
* material from the members for such
* an issue.

24. The Delegates passed a motion
* suggesting that members of the
* Society consider designating their
* AMA-ERF contributions specifically
* to the UNM Medical School.

25. The Liaison Committee to the
* University of New Mexico Medical
* School was instructed to investi-
* gate the possibility of televising
* selected clinics and regularly
* scheduled Basic Science Series and/or
* other methods of continuing medical
* education.

26. Hugh B. Woodward, M.D.,
* Albuquerque, was presented the 5th
* annual A. H. Robins award for his
* community service activities.

27. Carl H. Gellenthien, M.D.,
* Valmora, was presented A Certificate
* of Recognition from the Editorial
* Board, Rocky Mountain Medical Journal,
* for serving as the New Mexico Editor
* from 1944 to 1956.

28. Reginald Fitz, M.D., Dean, UNM
* Medical School, was presented a
* check for \$4,352.49 for the Medical
* School. This check represented ear-
* marked donations from New Mexico
* physicians through AMA-ERF and New
* Mexico's share of the total unear-
* marked funds received by AMA-ERF.

ORGANIZATIONAL NEWS (cont'd.)

29. New Officers Elected:

- * President: R. P. Beaudette, Raton
- * Pres.-Elect: Tom L. Carr, Albuquerque
- * Vice-Pres.: Enmit Jennings, Roswell
- * Speaker: Hugh B. Woodward, Albuquerque
- * Vice-Speaker: Ronald Dorn, Albuquerque
- * Councilors: John Smoker, Raton
- * Harry Ellis, Santa Fe
- * Earl Flanagan, Carlsbad

Omar Legant, M.D., Albuquerque, stepped down as president at this annual meeting. He had devoted all of his talents and energies to the high office during the past year, and we predict that history will record that his wisdom was excellent in considering the many crises during his administration.

COUNTY SOCIETY NEWS

Bernalillo County passed a \$10.00 dues increase at their May meeting. County dues will now be \$45.00.

Santa Fe County entertained the Sisters of Charity of St. Vincent Hospital at dinner on May 15, honoring them on the 100th anniversary of the arrival of the Order in Santa Fe.

Featured speaker was Fray Angelico Chavez, noted historian and poet who entertained the large audience with historical anecdotes about New Mexico. He pointed out that much has been accomplished by the Sisters of Charity since that intrepid group of four first ventured into the Indian Country a century ago.

NEW MEXICO SCIENCE FAIR STUDENT WINS AMA AWARD

Miss Johnna Lou Russell (16), Albuquerque, was one of the two national winners of the AMA's Award at the National Science Fair, May 8. Miss Russell will receive an all-expense paid trip to the AMA meeting in New York, June 20-24 to show her exhibit.

Miss Russell's exhibit dealt with DNA isolation and transformation in Staphylococcus Aureus.

She was a runnerup for the State Society's scholarship award at the State Science Fair in Socorro, April 10, 1965. John Sherman, Lovington, who won our \$500.00 scholarship in April, was one of the eight who won awards of merit from the AMA.

DR. BLASINGAME INJURED

"Bing" Blasingame, ex-Vice-Pres., A.M.A., slipped and fell while on a short vacation in Canada. He broke both bones just above the left ankle. He has a spiral fracture of the Tibia and a comminuted fracture of the Fibula. Treatment was instituted at Wesley Memorial Hospital, Chicago, May 28.

ROCKY MOUNTAIN CANCER CONFERENCE

The 19th annual Rocky Mountain Cancer Conference will be held at the Brown Palace, Denver, July 16-17. Write to R.M.C.C., 1809 E. 8th Ave., Denver.

AMA'S EDUCATION CAMPAIGN

The Medicare Bill (HR 6675) isn't law yet, therefore the AMA is continuing their education program. They will place ads in the Albuquerque Journal and Tribune. They have purchased 30 minutes of time on ABC-TV, Thursday, June 17, at 7:30 p.m., EDT. Title of program, "Your Doctors Report on Health Care at the Crossroads." Participants will be Drs. Donovan Ward and Edward Annis.

DELEGATES TO AMA FROM NEW MEXICO

Attending the AMA meeting in New York June 21-24, as official representatives of this Society will be Allan L. Haynes, M.D., Delegate; James C. Sedgwick, Alternate Delegate; Robert Beaudette, M.D., President and the Executive Secretary.

R. C. Derbyshire, M.D., Editor of the NEWSletter and President and Editor of the Federation of State Boards of Medical Examiners will attend as the official representative of the Federation.

Drs. Roy Goddard, Carl Gellenthien and J. E. J. Harris will attend the American College of Chest Physicians preceding the AMA meeting.

Dr. and Mrs. Connell will fly their plane to New York for the AMA Auxiliary meeting. Mrs. Connell is President of the New Mexico Medical Society Auxiliary.

STANDARD INSURANCE CLAIM FORM ORDER BLANK

New Mexico Medical Society
611 First National Bank Building, 219 Central, N.W.
Albuquerque, New Mexico

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