This Bulletin describes the political policies of the American Medical Association as presented at its Annual Meeting just held and in its lobbying in Washington.

DOCTORS IN POLITICS

The platform at the American Medical Association's Annual Meeting in San Francisco this week was backed by a huge enlargement of the Flandes painting, showing the family doctor mourning because he cannot save a dying child. "KEEP POLITICS OUT OF THIS PICTURE" was the big-letter caption.

Standing in front of this picture, Dr. Elmer L. Henderson, in his official address as incoming president of the AMA, pushed American doctors into partisan politics, encouraging the AMA's campaign against "creeping socialism" and attacking the present administration as:

"sick with intellectual dishonesty, with avarice, with moral laxity, and with reckless excesses," dominated by "ambitious men...who would make the American people walk in lockstep."

AMA's Million Dollar Advertising Campaign

Closely timed with Dr. Henderson's address was the announcement of the AMA's "nation-wide advertising campaign" to be launched early next October, to promote voluntary health insurance, and "to alert the American people to the danger of socialized medicine and to the threatening trend toward state socialism in this country."

This campaign will cost the AMA $1,120,000. There will be large advertisements in 11,000 newspapers and 30
leading national magazines; broadcasts from some 300 radio stations.

**AMA's Washington Lobby**

The same policies are reflected in the recent efforts of the AMA's Washington lobby to defeat extensions of Social Security, to block federal aid to medical education, school health services and other measures, and the failure of its representatives to take a positive stand in behalf of any National Health legislation, even such a bill as Senator Taft has proposed.

While the AMA avoided a frank stand against the enactment of the enlarged Social Security Bill as a whole, many of its medical societies did all they could to prevent passage, because of their general antagonism to the "Welfare State".

**Why the AMA fought Disability Insurance**

The AMA was more responsible than any other organization for knocking disability insurance, passed last year by the House of Representatives, out of the Senate Bill. The AMA has aligned itself with insurance companies which are against disability insurance because of direct self-interest. The AMA wants the help of those insurance companies in fighting National Health Insurance, and took the front of opposition for them against disability insurance.

AMA officials declared that disability insurance should be turned down because it is a step toward National Health Insurance or "Socialized medicine".

However, Senator Walter George, Conservative Southern Democrat, says there is nothing to this charge. During a Senate debate Senator Scott Lucas of Illinois, Democratic majority leader, asked Senator George, Chairman of the Finance Committee which reported the Social Security Bill for passage: "Is there anything in the (disability insurance) amendment which deals directly with what we refer to as socialized medicine?"

Senator George replied, "I don't think so...I do not think that is a valid objection to the amendment...any more than I think it is a valid objection to the original (Social Security) Bill, that it is a move towards Socialism". *Congressional Record*, June 20, 1935, p. 9032.

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Nominal AMA Support to OHF Bill

The only pending health bill which the AMA officially supports is one providing federal aid to the states to extend local public health departments. But in practice the AMA has put up no fight to help get this bill through the House. It passed the Senate last year unanimously.

Fighting Aid to Train More Doctors

The AMA has given no support to the bills which would increase federal aid for medical research. The AMA has done its utmost to defeat the bill for federal aid to medical education passed by the Senate last year. This year it has been held up in the House Committee on Interstate and Foreign Commerce by delaying tactics instigated by the AMA. The AMA has not dared to take a public stand against the bill, possibly because it would thus risk an open break with prominent physicians and deans of medical schools who favor the bill and believe that the freedom of the schools is fully protected by its provisions.

Alignment with Political Reaction

The political policies of Dr. Henderson's presidential address are not those of Republicans like Senators Lodge or Allen, or even Taft or Milliken. They follow the extreme right-wing of Republicans, the line of Guy Gabrielson, Chairman of the Republican National Committee, or Senators Bricker and Steury.

It is sad to report that such negative and reactionary policies are put forward officially as the position of a great profession dedicated to human service and including thousands of physicians whose personal lives are lives of service.

It is impossible to believe that the majority of American physicians would accept such a political alignment if they understood what is happening.

Unfortunately it is equally certain that the official representatives of the organized medical profession in many of our states do take this position and that their paid public relations agents will use the machinery and money at their disposal to fight the whole Fair Deal and to oppose every progressive candidate in his own State or District.

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