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ada News Letter

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CONGRESSIONAL COMMITTEE SHELVES A.D.A. RESEARCH BILL -- APPROVES LIMITED SUBSTITUTE MEASURE OFFERED BY REP. BREHM

The Committee on Interstate and Foreign Commerce of the House of Representatives Wednesday (May 12) shelved the A.D.A. dental research bill in favor of a limited measure offered as a last-minute substitute by Congressman W. E. Brehm (R.-Ohio), a dentist and one of the original sponsors of the A.D.A. bill. The new Brehm bill (H.R. 6470) was reported favorably by the committee despite objections from A.D.A. officials. The modified bill provides only for Federal grants up to \$750,000 to dental schools, universities and other institutions for the support of dental research projects. The principle provision of the original bill--an appropriation of \$2,000,000 for the establishment of a national dental research institute at Bethesda, Md.--was deleted entirely. The new Brehm bill was introduced only a few days before the committee met to consider the measure sponsored by the A.D.A. It was approved without a public hearing.

In explanation of his sudden shift from the A.D.A.-backed bill which bore his name (H.R. 4200), Rep. Brehm said that he had introduced the substitute bill to insure favorable action by the committee. Rep. Brehm later assured A.D.A. officials that he would attempt to restore the deleted provision for a dental research institute when the bill goes to conference with the Senate. The original A.D.A. bill (S. 176) was approved by the Senate last summer under the joint sponsorship of Senators Taft (R.-Ohio), Morse (R.-Ore.), Aiken (R.-Vt.), Murray (D.-Mont.) and Pepper (D.-Fla.). It was following favorable action in the Senate that Rep. Brehm introduced a similar bill (H.R. 4200) in the House. Earlier, Rep. Oren Harris (D.-Ark.) had also introduced an identical bill (H.R. 574).

The A.D.A. research bill has been before Congress for seven years. It has been approved three times by the United States senate but has never been passed by the House of Representatives. Last March 11, the House Committee conducted a public hearing on the three identical measures (S. 176, H.R. 4200, and H.R. 574). All witnesses testified in favor of the original A.D.A. bill. Questions asked by Congressmen gave no indication of opposition to the measure. Rep. Brehm, although a sponsor of one of the bills, was not present at the hearings. Immediately after the modified bill was introduced by Rep. Brehm a week ago, A.D.A. officials pointed out that failure of Congress to provide for a national dental research institute would defeat the original purpose of the measure. They pointed out that schools and other institutions, because of limited staffs and facilities, have not been able to accept all research grants now available under previous bills enacted by the Congress. Legislative observers agreed that chances of passage of the A.D.A. bill at the current session of Congress were considerably lessened by the shift of support by the House Committee to the new Brehm bill. Prior to this unexpected development, Dr. Carl O. Flagstad, chairman of the A.D.A. Committee on Legislation, had described prospects of approval of the A.D.A. bill as the brightest in the several years the measure has been pending before Congress.

NATIONAL HEALTH ASSEMBLY SETS DENTAL GOALS FOR NEXT DECADE

The need for increased dental services for children and the extension of preventive procedures to all age groups were the principle motifs in deliberations of nearly two-score delegates who composed the dental health section of the National Health Assembly staged at Washington, D. C., May 1 to 4. In a report to Oscar Ewing, federal security administrator who served as chairman of the assembly, the dental section described adequate dental service for children as "the most logical and effective means of ultimately bringing better dental health to the American people." Unanimously, the dental delegates rejected the principle of compulsory health insurance as a means of providing dental health care. Under the chairmanship of Dr. Ernest G. Sloman, dean, School of Dentistry, College of Physicians and Surgeons, San Francisco, the dental delegates tackled such major dental subjects as research, health education, care, financing of community programs and the training and distribution of personnel and evolved a set of five major goals for achievement during the next decade. These called for (1) prevention of dental disease through the application of effective preventive technics; (2) control of dental diseases by making dental treatment and dental health education available to every child as rapidly as resources will permit; (3) increased facilities for dental care in all hospitals and health centers; (4) improved distribution of dentists between urban and rural areas and an increase in the number of qualified dental practitioners in the nation; and (5) training and utilization of additional auxiliary personnel--dental hygienists, dental assistants and dental technicians.

Specific recommendations of the dental section called for: Federal support of scientific and administrative research in the field of dental health; Creation of a commission to define dental health care standards more explicitly; Extension of dental health education to all segments of the population; Full utilization of all proved measures of prevention and control of diseases; Increased government support of community dental health programs; Increased Federal aid to dental schools; Expanded dental educational opportunities for Negroes; Establishment of additional dental schools in areas of demonstrated need; Training of hygienists, assistants and technicians under the auspices of accredited dental schools or other schools operated on a non-profit basis. Full details of the dental section's report will be published in the June issue of The Journal of the American Dental Association.

DR. FORSYTH IS NAMED U.S.P.H.S. DENTAL CHIEF

Appointment of Dr. Bruce D. Forsyth, 41, as assistant surgeon general of the U. S. Public Health Service in charge of the dental division, effective May 17, has been announced in Washington by Dr. Leonard A. Scheele, new surgeon general. Dr. Forsyth will replace Dr. William T. Wright, Jr., who has been assigned to the Office of Indian Affairs in the Interior Department. Dr. Forsyth moves up from lieutenant colonel to brigadier general. Dr. Wright drops back to colonel's rank. At the same time, Dr. Scheele announced the appointment of Dr. Warren P. Dearing as Deputy Surgeon General replacing Dr. James A. Crabtree, who was assigned as head of the medical section of the National Security Resources Board. Dr. Dearing, at present, is chief of the commissioned personnel division of U.S.P.H.S.

NAME FULL-TIME SECRETARY FOR IOWA SOCIETY

The Iowa State Dental Society has named Dr. H. I. Wilson of Rockwell, as full-time secretary. Action by the Iowa Society brings to a total of twelve the number of A.D.A. constituents employing full-time secretaries to administer society affairs. Dr. Wilson succeeds Dr. A. N. Humiston of Cedar Rapids, and will assume office June 15. Several other state societies, including those of Ohio and Tennessee are considering the employment of executive secretaries.

SEN. THOMAS PROPOSES FEDERAL AID FOR DENTAL EDUCATION

Direct Federal government grants to schools of dentistry, medicine, nursing and public health and the award of scholarships to students on a merit basis are proposed in a new bill introduced in the United States Senate by Sen. Elbert D. Thomas (D.-Utah). The bill (S. 2588) was referred to the Senate Committee on Labor and Public Welfare. In the main, provisions of the bill were similar to recommendations made by dental delegates at the recent National Health Assembly in Washington. Principle provisions of the bill called for annual grants of \$8,000,000 to dental schools; \$20,000,000 to medical schools; \$18,000,000 to nursing schools; and \$2,000,000 to postgraduate schools of public health. Additional grants may be made up to 50 per cent of the cost of new construction of educational facilities. The bill provides that dental schools, to qualify for Federal aid, must not impose unreasonable restrictions against the admission of out-of-the state residents and must not bar students on the basis of race, color, national origin or creed. The bill further prohibits interference by any government agency or Federal official in the administration or control of any recipient institution. Both national and state scholarships were proposed in the bill, the former limited to medical students, and the latter for students of dentistry, medicine, nursing and public health. Applicants accepting national scholarships would be required to promise to spend one year in Federal service or in an area where there is a shortage of physicians for each two years of the scholarship. State scholarships would be limited to tuition and books. National scholarships would also include \$90 monthly expense allowance.

RESERVE OFFICERS ARE ELIGIBLE FOR PAY BONUS

Reserve dental officers who sign up for active duty of one year or more are eligible for the \$100 a month salary bonus voted officers of the regular corps. This was explained by the Army department in answer to a number of inquiries regarding operation of the salary bonus bill adopted by Congress last year. A.S.T.P. and V-12 trained officers are not eligible for the salary bonus until they have completed two years of active duty. Nor are interns eligible for the bonus. The bonus, it was explained, is paid to all other dental officers who volunteer for a period of active duty of one year or more. Officers serving for a lesser period of time are not eligible for the extra salary.

PLAN NATIONAL CHILD'S DENTAL HEALTH DAY

Plans are being completed by the Council on Dental Health for a nation-wide children's dental health day to be staged annually on the first Monday in February of each year. All state and local dental societies will be requested to arrange special programs for the discussion of technics in dentistry for children and to arrange for special educational programs for the benefit of the general public. It is also planned to request the President of the United States to issue a proclamation in support of the objective "to make available more and better dental health education and care for children and youth."

HOTEL RESERVATION BLANKS IN JUNE JOURNAL

Blanks for filing applications for hotel reservations for the 89th annual session of the American Dental Association to be held in Chicago Sept. 13 to 17, will be published in the June issue of The A.D.A. Journal. Reservations will be handled through a special housing bureau. Delegates will be housed at the Hotel Sherman where sessions of the House of Delegates will be held. Scientific sessions and exhibits will be at the Hotel Stevens.

PUBLICATIONS

The Bureau on Library and Indexing Service reports that many state and local societies are failing to send in copies of journals, programs and other official publications. These are needed for the permanent files of the Bureau. Editors and officers are requested to send two copies of all publications, including programs of annual meetings, to Mr. Murrell Wellman, A.D.A. librarian.

V.A. OFFICIAL DODGES DISCUSSION OF DENTAL PROGRAM FOR WAR VETERANS

Failure of Dr. Paul B. Magnuson, chief medical director of the Veterans Administration, to keep an appointment with A.D.A. officials on Friday, May 7, has again stymied efforts of the Association to correct the confused and rapidly-deteriorating V.A. dental treatment program for war veterans. Obviously unwilling to face the complaints raised by participating dentists from every state in the nation, Dr. Magnuson cancelled the long-standing appointment without explanation at the last minute. Since Dr. Magnuson succeeded Dr. Paul Hawley a few months ago, virtually nothing has been done to meet the mounting criticism of the V.A. dental treatment program. Nearly seven months have elapsed since the death of Dr. Milburn M. Fowler, chief of the V.A. dental division, yet no permanent successor has been appointed.

Principal criticism of the present V.A. program is that it is being forced into a type of clinic service in a growing number of areas. Agreements with the dental profession made shortly after the close of World War II by V.A. officials are being ignored. The former friendly and cooperative attitude of V.A. officials has been replaced by an attitude of evasiveness and indifference.

Present V.A. officials, with authority to act, have refused to examine objectively the present status of the dental treatment program. Instead, the program has been left in the hands of minor officials who apparently are either without authority or inclination to revise the faulty regulations and procedures. Conferences are now being planned by top A.D.A. representatives to request action from higher government officials who have the authority to act in behalf of the veteran.

ARMY PROMISES ANNOUNCEMENT BY JUNE 1 REGARDING RELEASE OF DENTAL OFFICERS

Whether A.S.T.P. trained dentists now serving in the Army Dental Corps will be released at the end of two years of active service, as originally promised, will be announced by June 1, according to Col. Paul I. Robinson, personnel division chief of the Army Medical Corps. In a letter to Dr. Harold Hillenbrand, A.D.A. general secretary, Col. Robinson pointed out that prior to April 15, it had been the policy of the Army to release these dental officers before the end of the two-year period if they had accrued leave to their credit. On April 15, the Army issued a new directive to retain on active duty for a minimum of two years all dental, medical and veterinary officers who are A.S.T.P. graduates or who were deferred from the draft during World War II for the purpose of completing professional training. Col. Robinson said the Army decision will be sent to everyone concerned "before June 1st." A similar announcement regarding Navy Dental Officers in the same category is expected to be released simultaneously. Unofficially, high officers of both the Army and Navy have indicated that all A.S.T.P. and V-12 trained officers will probably be released at the end of two years of active service provided "no unforeseen emergency develops." This hedge about an "unforeseen emergency" has resulted in widespread rumors that dental, medical and veterinary officers would be "frozen" in the services due to the present threatened national emergency. No such "freeze" order has been issued, according to an Army statement. Formal announcement of an over-all policy decision by June 1 should dispel many of the uncertainties resulting from the April 15 directive of the Army department.

CANCEL SPECIAL MEETING OF BOARD OF TRUSTEES

The Board of Trustees has cancelled the special meeting which had been scheduled for the Memorial Day week-end in Chicago for the purpose of reviewing budget requests for the last half of 1948 and the full calendar year of 1949. Instead the Board will meet several days in advance of the annual A.D.A. session in Chicago next September to consider fiscal problems of the Association. Pending the September meeting of the Board, all committees, departments and other agencies have been directed to hold expenditures to a minimum.