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ada News Letter

Vol. 1, No. 10 - July 1, 1948

SPECIAL DRAFT OF DENTISTS ELIMINATED IN SELECTIVE SERVICE LAW-- PLANS ANNOUNCED FOR DEFERMENT OF DENTAL AND PRE-DENTAL STUDENTS

The special draft of dentists, physicians and other professional personnel up to 45 years of age as proposed by the Armed Services committees of both the Senate and the House of Representatives was eliminated in the draft law adopted by Congress in the closing hours of its session on June 20. Under the law as finally approved, dentists and physicians, like all others, can be drafted only if they are under 26 years of age. Elimination of the special draft for professional personnel was first voted in the House of Representatives when this provision was vigorously attacked by Rep. Walter E. Brehm (R.-Ohio), a dentist, and a number of physicians who are members of Congress. Rep. Brehm charged that the Navy had refused to accept 2,700 dentists who sought to enlist because to do so would have ended the current shortage of dental personnel and made the special draft unnecessary. Physician members of Congress charged that the special draft provision tended to cast reflection on the patriotism of the health professions. The House action was accepted by the Senate in its approval of a compromise bill worked out by conferees of the two branches of Congress.

High officials of the armed services made no effort to hide their disappointment at the elimination of the special draft provisions for dentists and physicians. They pointed out that the armed forces already face shortages of professional personnel and expressed doubt that sufficient new graduates can be drafted from those of under 26 years of age to meet requirements. The situation is expected to be further complicated by the release this month of a large number of A.S.T.P. and V-12 trained dental officers who have completed their required two years of service. No announcement has been made of how the armed services will proceed in their efforts to secure adequate numbers of dentists and physicians when the draft machinery begins operating next fall. It is rumored that some civilian agency may be established shortly to review the dental and medical needs of the armed forces and make recommendations for the procurement of the necessary personnel. In the meantime, it is expected that campaigns for voluntary enlistment of dentists and physicians will be stepped up by all three branches of the service. As a result of the jam of bills rushed through Congress during its final days of session, the draft law had not been printed by July 1. Details of operation of the draft program are not expected to be announced by the armed services until final copies of the law are available.

The new draft law provides for special deferment on an individual basis for full-time students of dentistry, medicine, science, engineering and those preparing for the ministry. Under this provision it is expected that most dental students will be allowed to finish their professional training. It is also expected that sufficient number of pre-dental students will be deferred to maintain full enrollments of freshmen at dental schools. According to tentative plans revealed by Selective Service officials in Washington, deans of dental schools will be assigned the responsibility for the selection of dental and pre-dental students to be eligible for special deferment. The deans will be

authorized to issue certificates of deferment for both dental and pre-dental students. They also will have the authority, it was reported, to withdraw such certificates from students and award them to others whenever such action is indicated. Selective Service officials pointed out, however, that this plan is still tentative and is subject to revision before being placed in effect. A similar plan is being considered for the deferment of medical, pre-medical and other professional students so that the training of health personnel can be continued at maximum levels.

PRESIDENT TRUMAN SIGNS DENTAL RESEARCH LAW-- A.D.A. SPOKESMAN PRAISES WORK OF REP. BREHM AND SEN. MURRAY

The Association-sponsored dental research bill (H.R. 6726) was signed into law by President Harry S. Truman on June 24, just ten days after the measure had been rushed through the 80th Congress (A.D.A. News Letter, June 15). Dr. H. B. Washburn, of St. Paul, A.D.A. president, headed a group of Association officials who came to the White House to witness President Truman's signature which assures the establishment of a \$2,000,000 dental research building plus an annual appropriation of \$750,000 for the employment of a research staff and the subsidization of dental research at schools and other institutions. Other A.D.A. officials present at the White House ceremony were Dr. Carl O. Flagstad, of Minneapolis, chairman of the Committee on Legislation, Dr. Daniel F. Lynch, of Washington, D. C., Fourth district trustee, and Dr. C. Willard Camalier, also of Washington, assistant secretary. Dr. Bruce D. Forsyth, assistant surgeon general and Dr. H. Trendley Dean of the U. S. Public Health Service staff and Representative Walter E. Brehm (R.-Ohio), sponsor of the bill, were also present.

Following the White House ceremony in which the A.D.A. officials conveyed the thanks of the Association to President Truman, Dr. Flagstad issued a statement commending the action of Congress in writing a successful conclusion to the eight year long campaign of the A.D.A. to secure federal legislation in support of dental research. He named Rep. Brehm and Sen. James E. Murray (D.-Mont.) as deserving special credit for supporting the dental research bill. Dr. Flagstad's statement follows:

It (the signing of the bill) was a memorable event because it marked the final approval of legislation which will appropriate for the first time federal government funds directly to dentistry for dental research. In the eight years of the Association's efforts to pass this legislation, the profession of dentistry is indebted to many friends in Congress for their encouragement and continuous support. There are two members of Congress who deserve special credit for their exceptional service. Representative Walter Brehm, of Ohio, a dentist by profession, merits the appreciation of the dental profession because in the final session of the 80th Congress he carried the ball for us over the goal for a touchdown. Congressman Brehm used all the ingenuity within his command to avoid blockers in order to gain the enactment of the Dental Research Bill.

Senator James E. Murray, from Montana, also merits the Association's appreciation because he introduced the original Dental Research Bill eight years ago and has re-introduced it in every succeeding session of Congress. Senator Murray has consistently and energetically fostered our Dental Research Bill and secured its passage through the Senate in two different sessions of Congress. It is significant to note that throughout the congressional history of the Dental Research Bill there never was any organized opposition to the legislation and it always had strong bi-partisan support. The courteous attention of Congress at all times to representatives of the American Dental Association during the prosecution of this bill speaks well for the prestige of the Association and the high esteem in which it is held by the Congress of the United States.

U.S.P.H.S. PREPARES PLANS TO SEND TOPICAL FLUORIDE DEMONSTRATION TEAMS INTO EACH STATE AND TERRITORY

Plans for the establishment of topical fluoride demonstration projects in each state and territory of the nation during the next 12 months were completed at a three-day conference of state dental directors, dental society officials and state and territorial health workers held at Washington, D. C., on June 23, 24 and 25 under the sponsorship of the U. S. Public Health Service. Dr. John W. Knutson, head of the public health section of the U.S.P.H.S. who will be in charge of the program, served as conference chairman. A total of 41 states and two territories were represented. States and territories not represented included Alabama, Alaska, Arizona, Hawaii, Iowa, Louisiana, North Dakota, Wisconsin and Wyoming. According to plans worked out at the conference, demonstration teams will be sent only to those states who file formal requests with the U.S.P.H.S. In each state, the teams will operate on a mobile basis in close cooperation with state health departments and state dental societies. Each team will consist of a dentist, two dental hygienists and a clerk. Whenever feasible the team will operate in school buildings and topical fluoride treatments will be provided for both pre-school and elementary school children on a limited basis. Each state team will operate in from four to 12 geographic areas depending upon the size of the individual state. Dr. Knutson announced that all local dentists will be invited to visit the demonstrations as they are held in various communities to observe the technic of application of sodium fluoride solutions. The demonstrations will also serve as a training base for dentists and dental hygienists employed by state, county and city health departments, he pointed out. The program is being financed under a \$1,000,000 appropriation voted by the 80th Congress to encourage the use of topical fluorides as a caries control measure. The actual program is expected to be underway in several states within 60 days.

DR. BURNS IS NAMED AS DENTAL ADVISOR FOR VOCATIONAL REHABILITATION PROGRAM

Dr. William McGill Burns, of Brooklyn, N. Y., Second district A.D.A. trustee, has been named a member of the Professional Advisory Committee of the Office of Vocational Rehabilitation of the Federal Security Agency. Originally, the committee consisted entirely of physicians representing various specialty fields and organizations and persons from fields related to medicine. Dr. Burns is the first representative of the dental profession to be included on the national committee. Simultaneously with the announcement of Dr. Burns' appointment, agency officials recommended that dental members be named for all state vocational rehabilitation committees and that dental consultants be named to state staffs. During the past three years, dental services provided by the agency have nearly tripled. At a meeting of the national committee in Chicago on June 20, it was unanimously agreed that new objectives and regulations should be evolved covering dental services. Approximately one-half of all dental services provided through vocational rehabilitation offices during the past year were for dentures.

DR. HORNER WINS HIGH PRAISE FROM DENTAL EDUCATORS

Dr. Harlan H. Horner, secretary of the Council on Dental Education of the A.D.A., was cited for his outstanding contributions to dental education at a dinner meeting of the American Association of Dental Schools at Buffalo, N. Y., on June 21. Dr. Gerald Timmons, dean of Temple University Dental School, presented Dr. Horner with a wrist watch and a travelling bag as gifts from the Association. Dr. Robert McNulty, dean of Loyola University (Chicago) Dental School presented Dr. Horner with a testimonial scroll signed by present and former members of the Council who worked with Dr. Horner during the eight years he has served on the A.D.A. staff. Principal speakers were Dr. Arnold D. Mason, of Toronto, Can., Association president, and Dr. J. Ben Robinson, dean of the Baltimore College of Dental Surgery. On the following evening Dr. Horner was elected to honorary membership in Omicron Kappa Upsilon. Dr. Horner plans to retire Oct. 1.

NATIONAL GROUP URGES STATES TO HOLD HEALTH ASSEMBLIES

A recommendation that each state conduct a health assembly patterned after the National Health Assembly (A.D.A. NEWSLETTER, May 15) held in Washington, D. C., in May was adopted at a meeting of the Assembly's executive committee at Washington last Monday (June 28). The recommendation urged that such state health assembly give "equal representation to professional and consumer groups in order to stimulate the widest possible cooperation among all concerned in health." The committee also urged that State conferences endeavor to stimulate local conferences along the same lines "to emphasize and facilitate essential local planning and operation of health services." The executive committee also voted to maintain its own organization as a continuing advisory and coordinating group and that Federal Security Administrator Oscar E. Ewing, the chairman, be authorized to appoint a small working subcommittee to recommend to the full committee plans on public education relating to health and on continuing organization and financing. Mr. Ewing announced that he will ask the subcommittee to consider (1) publication of the final recommendations of the 14 sections of the original Assembly, (2) exploration of methods for implementation of the Assembly's recommendations and (3) development of plans for the guidance of state and local health assemblies. Dr. Harold Hillenbrand, A.D.A. general secretary, attended the executive committee session as the representative of the dental profession.

BRIEFS IN THE NEWS

Dr. H. B. Washburn, A.D.A. president, conveyed greetings from the dental profession in a brief address before the American Medical Association House of Delegates meeting in Chicago on June 21....In June, Dr. Washburn also held conferences with Dr. Paul Magnuson, medical director of the Veterans Administration in an effort to straighten out difficulties that have developed regarding the V.A. dental service program for veterans. Dr. Magnuson assured Dr. Washburn that the V.A. would make every effort to settle satisfactorily the large number of complaints of practicing dentists regarding the V.A. program....The V.A. is reported to be looking seriously for a new dental director to fill the vacancy which has existed for nearly nine months since the death of Dr. Milburn P. Fowler. Dr. E. M. Kennedy has served as acting dental director since Dr. Fowler's death. Announcement of the new appointment is expected to be made shortly....An honorary membership in the Canadian Dental Association was conferred last week upon Dr. Harold Hillenbrand, A.D.A. general secretary, who addressed the Canadian meeting at Murray Bay, Quebec....Dr. Hillenbrand will speak at the summer institute of the Dental Dealers of America at Ohio State University at Columbus on July 6....Dr. Hillenbrand will also address the Seventh Pacific Coast Dental Conference to be held at Salt Lake City, Utah, on July 12-15....Charges have been dropped against all eight dental officers who were arrested at Fort Eustis, Va., in May (A.D.A. NEWSLETTER, May 15). Investigation of the affair is still being conducted by the inspector general's office. Pending completion of this report, Army chiefs have withheld comment on the case....A blunt warning that compulsory health insurance may be saddled on the U.S. within the next three years unless "organized medicine" pursues a course different than that it has followed during the past ten years was made by Dr. Paul R. Hawley, former V.A. medical director, in a speech at the 4th annual conference of officers of state medical associations in Chicago a week ago. The outspoken former army general, now chief executive officer of Blue Cross and Blue Shield, asserted: "If we get socialized medicine in this country it will be organized medicine that has brought this curse upon us...If the medical profession does not at once assume the leadership, if it does not at once cease its double talk and double dealing with the voluntary non-profit prepayment plans, we are going to have compulsory government health insurance in this country within three years." Dr. Hawley advocated establishment of a national service agency to underwrite local medical care plans....Articles on topical fluorides were published in the July issue of The Woman's Home Companion and the July 3 issue of The Saturday Evening Post. Both articles contained some inaccuracies, particularly in relation to costs and the length of time required for the treatments, but are well worth reading...The United States is now a full participating member of the World Health Organization.