Dynamic Chiropractic

PHILOSOPHY

McAndrews Urges Thousands of Chiropractors to Reinvest in Their Profession

David J. Redding, DC

Addressing more than 2,000 chiropractors and their assistants on Saturday evening, January 5, 1990, in the Grand Ball Room of the Riviera Hotel in Las Vegas, Nevada, George P. McAndrews, counsel of the chiropractors in the Wilk vs. AMA et al. case and general counsel for the American Chiropractic Association (ACA), urged the assembled chiropractors to make a major investment in the financial well-being of their profession.

As the featured guest speaker at the Parker Seminar, Mr. McAndrews suggested that it was imperative that chiropractors abandon the tawdry practice of advertising their success by advertising their incomes -- a routine adopted by some practice builders and consultants to promote their businesses in the past, but a routine that a mature profession should scrupulously avoid.

In a wide-range presentation, which he characterized as the first time he had addressed any practice building or consultant's seminar, Mr. McAndrews emphasized the importance to the maturing chiropractic profession: (1) of developing communicative skills so that the general public is not turned off by quasi-religious, non-scientific terminology; (2) the need for chiropractors to join and actively participate in the ACA during the critical next few years, when legislation and rule making will draw boundaries that will govern health care and its financing for the profession into the next century; and (3) of extreme importance, he stressed the need for chiropractors to reinvest a portion of their gross incomes in their schools and in significant research programs.

In disparaging some chiropractors' efforts to beat their chests by bragging about their annual incomes (usually falsely), Mr. McAndrews suggested, instead, that most professionals show gratitude for their success by reinvesting a portion of their assets in the institutions that helped make them a success. For instance, without revealing either his income or his contribution, Mr. McAndrews stated that he customarily donates two percent of his gross income to the University of Notre Dame where he received his engineering and law degrees.

Emphasizing that until chiropractic receives significant government or foundation financial assistance, the profession must fund itself. Mr. McAndrews suggested that chiropractors should make it a habit to donate one percent of their annual gross incomes to the chiropractic college where they received their education and one percent of their gross incomes to the emerging not-for-profit chiropractic research organizations, such as the Foundation for Chiropractic Education and Research (FCER), who is conducting and sponsoring research that is essential to proving the effectiveness and efficiency of chiropractic care.

Without such research, Mr. McAndrews fears that major legislative initiatives in the coming years will be fruitless. "Insurance companies and large self-insured employers are demanding cost effectiveness based on verifiable research results," he said.

In a moment of nostalgia, Mr. McAndrews addressed the 70-year-old Dr. Parker. He reviewed the history of the profession during the time when the AMA was attempting to eliminate it. He read from an internal AMA document, that was made an exhibit in the Wilk vs. AMA et al. trial, where a medical physician reported to Doyl Taylor that Dr. Parker had been able to give a sense of family and purpose to the otherwise disorganized chiropractors. Mr. McAndrews praised Dr. Parker for his years of service to the profession and enlisted his support in correcting past mistakes within the profession (some caused by the AMA boycott) and in charting new courses for reformulating the jargon of the profession so that the public at large will understand the benefits of chiropractic care as reflected in a growing body of research.

David J. Redding, D.C.
Danville, New York