

Presidential Address*

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It is with much humility but with grateful appreciation that I have had the privilege and honor to serve as your president for the past year. It has been stimulating and challenging to attempt to follow in the footsteps of your past presidents, such illustrious surgeons as Don O'Donoghue, Joe Godfrey, Jack Hughston, Joe King, and Les Bodner. These men started us on a great and worthy adventure with excellent planning and the best of leadership. Our enthusiastic efficient Board of Directors and Committee Chairmen have made my job both pleasant and rewarding. I would like to express my sincere appreciation to each of them for their cooperation, hard work, and untiring efforts.

It is my firm belief that the American Orthopaedic Society for Sports Medicine is on the threshold of greatness and will move forward to make outstanding contributions not only to sports medicine and orthopaedics, but to the entire field of medicine and surgery.

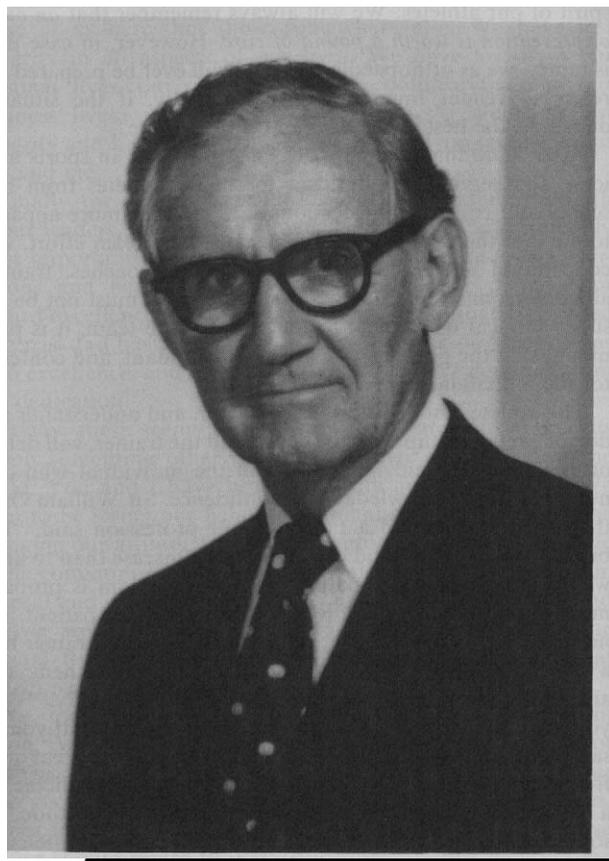
The American Academy of Orthopaedic Surgeons, our parent affiliate organization, has been helpful and cooperative. President Mason Hohl has lent us an attentive ear and responded to our requests in a most gracious and agreeable manner. We are indeed grateful to him and his staff for their cooperation and for his presence here with us at this meeting. We believe that we can continue in a very symbiotic way for the good of orthopaedics in general, and for our athletes and our patients in particular.

Drs. Irwin Dardik, Allen Ryan, Vernon Nickel, and Edward Hixson, outstanding leaders in sports medicine in their respective fields, in Olympic sports, and in rehabilitation, do us great honor by sharing with us their time and knowledge. We are also grateful to Colonel Miller for his leadership in the great Olympics, even though his schedule would not allow him to join us today.

The challenge we all face often appears like the challenge of climbing Mount Everest when we consider that there are over

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20 organizations involved in the care, training, and treatment of thousands of athletes.

Each organization has an important role and a field of study which will contribute to the over-all accomplishment of our common goal: e.g., better athletes, safer games of play, fewer injuries, and championship accomplishments. So we must on a local, national, and an international level work together.

The media, both domestic and foreign, continually point out the need for some crash programs in research, training, and development of our athletes to compete with those in similar

pursuits in foreign countries. However, they often fail to recognize that we have two great advantages over those countries that are not part of the free world. First, our athletes are free to choose their life-style and desires; and second and more important, they are individuals and not just pawns or cogs in a great machine. The individual's freedom and development is more important to us than any transitory glory or honor which may be bestowed upon him or her, upon a nation, a political leader, a coach, or even a parent.

From the time of creation, only one animal, man, was given a soul and the ability to choose and decide between good and evil, right and wrong. Our athletes must never fall into the pit of "soul erosion" for the gain of glory for an individual or for any political system. The American Orthopaedic Society of Sports Medicine stands ready and willing to cooperate with any and all organizations that are working for the training, development, protection, and treatment of the body, mind, and spirit of our athletes. We will always remember that *an ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure*. However, in case there is injury, we as orthopaedic surgeons will ever be prepared and ready to render immediately or belatedly, if the situation demands, the best of medical and surgical care.

After more than 25 years of being interested in sports medicine and serving as physician for many athletes from high school and college to professionals, it becomes more apparent to me that the care and treatment must be a team effort, with cooperation and collaboration among the coaches, trainers, allied personnel, and doctors. As doctors, we must not be just super surgical or medical technicians for the team; it is paramount that the physician be a friend, confidant, and confessor for the individual athlete.

The athlete who believes in his doctor, and understands that doctor's relationship with the coach and the trainer, will deliver on the sporting field far more than the individual who does not possess that knowledge and confidence. Sir William Osler, that great leader, and a father of our profession said, "It is better to know what kind of patient has a disease than to know what kind of disease a patient has." This axiom is probably more applicable to the athlete than to any other patient. It is never necessary to tell athletes that the doctor and trainer have a good rapport with the coach and will protect them; they always sense this. An old truism expresses it clearly, "What you are doing speaks so loudly that I can't hear what you are saying." All life is an attitude, and never forget that great quote from Proverbs, "A merry heart doeth good like medicine but a broken spirit drieth up the bones." All life is an attitude, and so we must keep a positive attitude and a cheerful countenance.

We in this great free democracy must always remember that human beings were born to be self-sustaining, independent, productive, and proud participants on teams, but even more so in society. Anything we do that makes a person think less of himself ought not to be tolerated, for elevating each individual's sense of self-sufficiency brings out the best in that person.

Now, if I may digress a bit, I would like to talk a little about our great nation. How did Columbus discover this New World?—not only by compass, sextons, stars, and the heavens but by faith in an ever-abiding Creator. How did the Puritans and Pilgrims survive the trials and tribulations of the vast wilderness

of their new world and its many freezing winters and hostile Indians?—not by force or strength but by faith. How did George Washington and his small ragged army survive 8 long years of war and finally defeat a much superior army from the strongest nation on the earth?—*by faith and belief in the Creator*. Washington stated in his farewell address, "Of all the dispositions and habits which lead to political well being, religion and morality are inseparable supports. In vain would that man claim the tribute of patriotism who should labor to subvert these great pillars of human happiness, these firmest props of the duties of men and citizens. Let it be simply asked where is the security for property, for reputation, for life, if the sense of religious obligation deserts the oaths, which are the instruments of investigation in courts of Justice? And let us indulge with caution the supposition that morality can be maintained without religion;. . . Reason and experience both forbid us to expect that national morality can prevail in exclusion of religious principle."

Keith Fuller, the current President and General Manager of The Associated Press, after visits during 1977 and 1978 to foreign countries—Japan, South Korea, West Germany, New Zealand, Australia, South Africa, and many other countries—said: "I am particularly perturbed at what has happened to our prestige abroad since Vietnam. All the foreign leaders I've spoken with seem to have one thing in common. They think we lack resolve. They think we are confused, and they see this country in the twilight of its greatness. Leaders I've talked with are absolutely mystified that we would give any credence whatsoever to SALT talks with Russia. . . . When you have an adversary like Russia, you're living in a fool's paradise." What has happened from those negotiations, he added, is that the international influence and prestige of the Soviet Union has grown, and that growth has accelerated in direct relation to United States cutbacks. But he quickly pointed out that the United States "has, as a resource, freedom. It has the most advanced civilization that we have ever known . . . (but) it's almost as though we have to sort of revive what we lost in Vietnam. We lost so much, much more than the war. It was a turning point in our moral breakdown, in the *divisive* problems with our families."

As solutions, he recommended *renewed faith in the American economic system, renewed interest in the family and the church activities, and stronger local control of the public schools systems*.

Prime F. Osborn III, President and Chief Operating and Administrative Officer of Seaboard Coast Line Industries Line, Inc., in an address on the beginning of America's third century, made some interesting observations. First, that we take stock of *where we stand in our nation and make an appraisal of where we are heading*. Then, he continued . . .

During that period of history which we call the Middle Ages, man was concerned primarily with survival. His main effort was to obtain food, shelter, and clothing as required. However, during this period, man became dissatisfied with his lot. This was largely because of the rapid spread of Christianity; he became convinced that there was more to life than mere survival. This trend toward having a better life provoked much activity, particularly political activity, and it became worldwide. All of this culminated in the founding of our nation.

The founding of this nation marked an entirely new concept of government. It marked the beginning of a period when government would be concerned about the individual as such, that government would be concerned with the preservation of the dignity and the worth of each individual. All of our structure, our laws, morals, and practices were and are directed toward the preservation of the rights of the individual. For the first time in history, the individual was the primary concern of a government; the founding of this nation brought hope to the world. Indeed, it still brings hope to the world.

Let us consider the characteristics of our great nation:

The *first* great characteristic of our nation is *freedom*. If we want to travel across this great land of ours, we can do so without getting a travel permit. We can worship as we please. We can write and say what we wish so long as we respect the rights of others. One's home is his castle.

The *second* characteristic of our nation is *efficiency*. The free enterprise system which we have developed under our form of government has produced the greatest civilization that man has ever seen. This free enterprise system, even during this period when some people say it is declining, has nevertheless accomplished things which are spectacular. For example, it has put a man on the moon and let the world watch it live on television. Our gross national product has grown from less than \$100 billion just 40 years ago to in excess of \$1,000 billion today. Under this great free enterprise system, 36 million people are covered under private pension plans whose assets today exceed \$89 billion. We have 56 million children in school in our country. With only 6% of the world's population in our nation, we still, year after year, produce between 37% and 42% of all of the world's goods. Indeed, the world has never seen such efficiency as has been produced by our free enterprise system.

The *third* great characteristic of our nation is its *humanitarianism*. No other civilization, no other country in the world's history has fed so many hungry people, has housed so many homeless people, has come to the rescue of so many people ill or in trouble. Indeed, we have helped people in all kinds of conditions, all over the world. Thirty-five years ago, several nations of the world attacked our country without provocation; then we with our allies defeated them. At the termination of that war, we spent \$119 billion in the rehabilitation of those countries that had attacked us. For the past 30 years, over 10% (the Biblical tithing) of our gross national product has been spent in charitable undertakings. There can be no doubt about it, this country has a heart.

We have a great nation in America. We have the greatest the world has ever seen without question. This can be lost. Burke has said that for evil to conquer, it is only necessary that good men do nothing. There have been 19 great civilizations of history. Some historians include a few more; however, Toynbee says 19. Each of these great civilizations has risen to power and held it for varying periods of time and then declined. We are the 19th of these great civilizations. Each one of our predecessors has followed the same *cyclical* experience—every single one of them.

This *cyclical* experience begins with a people in slavery, either figuratively or literally. To those people in slavery there comes a faith in God, and with this faith in God there comes

courage. Courage has been followed by freedom. Freedom has produced prosperity. Prosperity has been followed by selfishness. Selfishness has been followed by apathy and apathy has been followed by dependence and dependence is only one step from slavery. How far have we traveled in this *cyclical* experience? Specifically, it is hard to say, but we can all recognize that we have traveled very rapidly and far. We must reverse this trend if our civilization is to survive.

What has caused this country to reach the point it must reverse the cycle if she is to survive?

The *first* of these causes might be termed the unfortunate posture of business today. We seem constantly to overlook this, and yet business is condemned by the youth, by the media, by political leaders, and by teachers—not all people in these groups, but a majority of them. It is absolutely amazing how little our students know of the free enterprise system and what it means to our country.

The *second* cause is our loss of integrity. I am speaking to those of us here, not those somewhere else. We have lost integrity in all aspects of our lives. We have lost it in our personal lives, our church lives, our political lives, in our business lives, and “even in our athletics”. We have lost integrity and I am not talking about others. I am talking about you and me.

Finally, the *third* cause is our loss of faith. We have lost faith in our leaders, in our government, in ourselves, and probably most importantly, we have lost faith in our time-tested institutions and beliefs. We no longer encourage, demand, or reward excellence. In colleges we have courses that are graded on a pass-fail basis. The point is, the hallmark of America has been excellence, and it seems as though we have departed from this dedication.

Today, there seems to be a movement afoot to make this nation something other than the number one nation of the world. You and I have heard this; you and I know this. We seem to be losing our belief in national sovereignty and to be changing our attitude toward communism. There is no change in the communist view. It is conflicting with us in every aim, internal and external. There really can be no compromise and yet, we are destroying the Central Intelligence Agency, the Federal Bureau of Investigation, and other institutions that protect our national sovereignty. This is tragic.

We, today, seem to be losing our nobility of purpose in action. We see on all sides challenges to our concepts of courage, honor, and duty. There is definitely a change in our concepts of morality which I need not detail here; the point is, Americans have always had an unspoken nobility of purpose and we should return to that dedication.

We are losing faith in another American dogma, the willingness to assume responsibility. We no longer assume responsibility for virtually anything. We do not even assume responsibility for ourselves. We think the government owes us, but we forget that the government cannot owe us anything that it does not first take from us. We have in the past assumed responsibility for the direction of our lives, but we no longer do so. Instead we seek security. Indeed we have made security an end in itself. The people of this nation have in the past sought opportunity. Security has been a by-product. A young person

today in applying for a job inquires initially about his salary, working hours, vacation policy, and retirement program; he used to be concerned with chances for promotion and opportunities for advancement. There are a few exceptions and herein lie the rare stories of spectacular successes.

Now, you say what has all of this to do with sports medicine? Well, I challenge each of you: we probably have one of the best opportunities in our nation to help turn the tide and lead us back to a true, honest, God-fearing, strong, powerful nation. Grant you, there are still many great and noble people in this country, but there are far too many looking for the all-indulgent, mundane, easy life. Too many homes, too many schools, and now even our military lack discipline and control. The last bastion for these virtues of rearing the young and directing them in the true and rewarding channels that develop boys and girls into real men and women appears to lie in sports. *As a group, our coaches probably have the position of greatest influence. But we, as team physicians and advisors, can set an example of faith, strength, and influence not only for the players and the trainers, but for the coaches as well.*

One of our nation's best young coaches, in his most recent book has said, and I quote, "Am I in line with what my Creator wants from me? If I am then I don't have to worry about my

won-loss record or what people think of me, for I have endeavored to do my best with what God gave me. A coach is in a position to put in a plug for clean living and high ideals." And so, doctors and especially physicians in sports medicine, are in a unique position to have great influence on the youth and thus the future of our nation. *We can be the nucleus that can spread the good, the great, and the ethical standards across this nation, and in turn across the world,* which will lead us on to greater and nobler heights. David Crockett, that great frontiersman, who over 100 years ago was elected twice to the Congress of the United States had as his motto: "Be sure you are right and go ahead." So, let us not take the easy, soft way, but whatever we do, do with all our heart, mind, and strength. I see a great new surge in our youth and especially in our athletes for a better world.

It is my firm belief that if we continue in our true endeavors as intellectually honest, hard-working, God-fearing physicians and surgeons that we will not have to worry about the reports of the media, of the politicians in Washington, or any other capitol. For as long as man is willing to *work* and keeps his faith in God and in himself nothing can permanently defeat him.