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Exclusive: Interview With Dr. Marshall Himes

by D. Chadwick Kaufman

For the newer generations of Palmer College students who are unaware of the age old respect Dr. Marshall Himes has commanded from chiropractors of previous generations, it may be that the contents of this interview with him will suffice to appease the curious. If not, then ask for his credentials from the more veteran instructors who are Palmer graduates, men Dr. Himes invariably instructed. Dr. Himes is a Palmer alumnus of the class of 1930, the year Dr. B.J. Palmer worked hardest to sharpen his senior classmates on toggle-rod adjusting and the Hole-In-One system in preparation for his introduction of it at Lyceum that summer. Later, in the middle 1940s, Dr. Himes began a career of instruction at Palmer which led him eventually to its Technique Department Head, where he remained throughout the latter era of B.J. Palmer. From those days Dr. Himes is reputed as "B.J.'s Right-hand man," and his is regarded the last word in upper cervical practice. But Dr. Himes has refused to remain inert with old ideas, resting on the sun-washed bank of past accomplishment. His concepts on neuropathic processes in the cause of disease have remained as progressive as the breakthroughs in the field of neurologic research demand. Indeed, perhaps his most significant contribution to his profession has been to be a model of a man with no tie but to scientific fact, and his wisdom that, through all scientific research, chiropractic principle, will in some way, prevail in fine form. Obviously, the ideas of a man of Dr. Himes's reputation will be dissected by the various factions of our profession to provide evidence and substance for their own arguments.



But to do so would be as immature as our arguing in itself. Not to be melodramatic, but in another sense it would be an intellectual sacrifice to twist the marvellous products of a brilliant mind that has focused itself unselfishly on chiropractic for the last half century. Let this material be handled by individuals only in its entirety, and avoid misrepresentation and distortion of it through convenient selection of catch-phrases.

Historical

Beacon: "Dr. Himes, would you tell us of your background and your introduction to the profession?"
Dr. Himes: "Well, I was born in Chicago in 1910. I got into chiropractic through a long extinct practice of B.J.'s called the *Palmergram*. *Palmergrams* were started as a result of a Vaudevillian actress being injured by a chiropractor. In those days an adjusting table consisted of no more

than a headpiece and tail piece, with the patient suspended loosely between the two. Anyway, this actress had her back broken by this one chiropractor falling on her. The chiropractor was drunk, but even more unfortunately for him the actress happened to be the girlfriend of one Mr. Albej, who ran the whole Vaudeville circuit, and who retaliated on chiropractic by putting out the word to all the touring Vaudevillians across the country to run down the profession. And they did. They began hurting the profession tremendously, because in those days the Keith Albej Orpheum Circuit was the only form of live entertainment there was. Every movie started with a Vaudeville show, beside the big touring shows, and every performer would take a pot-shot at chiropractic.

"So B.J. himself had to go see Mr. Albej. B.J. said it was unfair to condemn a group by the actions of one man. B.J. told Albej that any Vaudevillian could get an adjustment anytime, anywhere he wanted one for free — and that the chiropractor could send the bill to B.J. if he wanted to charge the performer. Why, with these *Palmergrams*, as they were called, Vaudeville people came to chiropractors in droves. Piano players, acrobats, comedians, they all began promoting chiropractic instead of tearing it down.

"Anyhow, back in Chicago I knew a brother and sister roller skating act, "Wheeler and Wheeler," who always carried *Palmergrams*. *Palmergrams* got so big by 1929 that they captured everybody's attention, and in that year of the Crash chiropractic caught my fancy and I decided to enter the profession.

"My chiropractor urged me to go
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Himes continued from page 1 to Palmer College. Of course, I pointed out to Dr. Parker (unrelated to the modern seminar tycoon*) that Chicago had its own chiropractic college. "Yeah, but you don't want to go there; he told me. It's not too good. You go to Davenport — you go to B.J. "I took a little time off from the eighteen months and graduated in 1931. B.J. gave his personal supervision to every individual of my class, teaching us the pattern and x-ray analysis of HIO, which he was introducing to the field in the 1930-1931. Lyceums, B.J. made my class into the best togglers there ever were. There have been great individual togglers since, but man for man we were the difference between pro and nonpro. But toggle wasn't all that we were taught. At that time it was a technique transition period; we were still taught full-spine adjusting. At Lyceum he paired our class off and invited the entire profession to bring their problem cases to us.

"Let me tell you that B.J. carried a bull whip when he personally supervised you, too. My relationship with him from then on was a Vince Lombardi kind of thing — instant love and hate. That was his way; he always felt a personal bond with

every student in the clinic."

Beacon: "Were you the best in your class?"

Dr. Himes: "I don't know. We didn't go that route. . . . I guess I had a lot of patients and so the general consensus was that I was good."

Beacon: "Would you tell us about going into practice?"

Dr. Himes: It was an extraordinarily tragic time for me. I was good friends with Dr. Parker and planned to practice with him. On the way home with my father from 1931 Lyceum, Dr. Parker rolled his "Pregnant Buick" — it was one of the first cars to have curves instead of the box chassis — and was killed. But my dad was thrown clear without a scratch. Parker and I had grown to become close friends. In October 1931 I reopened his office."

Class Instruction

Beacon: "What do you remember of classroom atmosphere?"

Dr. Himes: Well you see, we learned to adjust in the auditorium that used to be on the second floor of the D.D. Palmer Memorial Building. There were rows of student chairs facing a stage in which you and your out-patient sat as you wrote down your case history. You then gowned the patient,

set them on a stool in the aisle, and ran your Neurocalometer. After that, why, you went right up on stage, where two instructors stood over you, and performed your adjustment before God and everybody! It was all done free of charge."

Toggle Recoil

Dr. Himes: "Toggle itself started in the teens, but B.J. really perfected the toggle when he went into HIO. Each adjustment has twenty-six integral parts, starting in the way you set your foot. It's as high a skill as any manual process; just as a good tennis swing, or piano playing. It's in disuse today, one; because it's taught wrong; and two; it therefore hurts the patient. He's not going to buy it. There are other ways to make that snap-crackle-pop he wants to hear. The toggle is a mechanism that can be used to adjust misalignment of all segments. And it will work everytime and not hurt if you do it correctly."

Chiropractic Technique

Dr. Himes: "The pendulum, and rightfully so, has swung from these millimeter measurements of spinal segments; as you see in Grostic, Keck and Blair x-ray analysis; to a more sensible attitude of neurologic dysfunction. After being a HIO man myself from many years, I know today that such minute analysis is unnecessary. I say that in total honesty — Let me put it another way: B.J. said of subluxation, "An invasive force can enter the body at any point, and carries with it the potential for the production or the reduction of the vertebral subluxation." Now, that's dogma. Let me say it another way: A specific stress insult can enter the body at any point and carries with it the potential for the expansion or the extinguishment of the neuropathic process. There is a difference. B.J. believed that you could hit a subluxated person in the butt with a shovel, and the "shock waves", in some instances, would reset the Atlas and give you a reduction. Today we know that that is dogma! We know striking the patient doesn't necessarily change that Atlas — but it does change the neurology.

"Now, to say that this intrusive strike can potentially expand or extinguish the neuropathic process is true. And whether or not a given technique can accomplish this extinguishment is what makes it good or useless; depending upon the time, space and arrangement they are used on the patient. Specificity of adjustment is a quality which lies within the patient; not within the system I practice. We must think in terms of "Where can I intrude into this nervous system to extinguish the neuropathic process, otherwise some of your patients will remain unresponsive to your treatment. To be effective I need to locate that point of intrusion which will end the neuropathic process. We need a lot of work in that area. The importance of specificity here D.D. brought out, in that all segments of the spine are specific, and, in some instances, articulations other than spinal. You can, by accident, sometimes extinguish neuropathic processes. Back in my day we had an instructor who was a terrible arthritic, with no relief until one night he piled his car on a culvert. We brought him back to the clinic and found no measurable nerve interference on the "caligraph". His readings were gone from the crash and he got well. Demolished his car. Pile your car into a culvert and get adjusted.

"You see, we are dealing with something of enormous complexity. The nervous system not only fades into nebulous areas of computerization, but it also borders on what used to be called "spiritual factors". Science today is seeing the importance of examining these areas of spiritualism. In my day such creative thinking — meditation, self-hypnosis, bio-feedback — all were considered Occultism. Our knowledge of them currently is crude in comparison to what we will learn, say, in the next twenty-five years."

The Neuropathy

The neuropathy is an aberrant nervous process and goes beyond chiropractic philosophy. Read

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New Pi Tau Delta Members



Nil Sine Magno Labore

Pi Tau Delta International Honor Society held its banquet for induction of new members on 9 March 1980. The Society's Banquet was held in the Garden Room of the Glass Rainbow in East Moline, Illinois.

Dr. G. O. Schmiedel, faculty advisor,

presided; welcoming all in attendance and recognizing the fifty-six new Society members, and presenting the Honor-key pins in token to their initial membership. Dr. Victor Strang, a former inductee of the Honor Society, was also in attendance.

Pi Tau Delta Officers

Pres. Andrew Lawrence;
V. Pres. Joseph Santarsieri;
Sec. Treas. Terry L. Webb;
Advisor Dr. G.O. Schmiedel.

Mettler Sonicator II

(ME-702 Model)

Ultrasound Machine

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"Spencer's Definition of Life." He observes that life is more than just a quality of internal relations adjusting to external reactions — there is a prophetic, an anticipatory judgement, on the part of the body long before a pathology is developed. Because of the enormous complication of living factors it is impossible for me to speak of the neuropathic process in the detail you would like me to. But a neuropathy can be defined briefly as any derangement of a nerve or nerve system where it is not carrying out the function for which it is designed. D.D. Palmer said it on page 57 of his book: "In disease, mental impulses are: not impeded, stopped, or cut off. They are modified."

"Now you look at modern research. You cannot command the attention of a researcher today with a word like 'mental impulse'. Whereas, if you ask about the qualitative factor of nerve activity he'll know what you're talking about. Think of your qualitative factor like this: You pick up the telephone and listen for your dial tone — good, you say, circuits working; and that is your quantitative factor. But as soon as that base tone is altered by the voice of someone talking to you, sending a message by changing the tone, that is your qualitative factor."

"If you asked researchers today about this factor they'll have to admit they don't know. We've only investigated it in the last fifteen years. But look back to D.D. — the only difference between D.D. of 1910 and research today is a *syntactic* difference. This is why I criticize Price and others. They've been keeping their foot on the hose too long, explaining chiropractic principle with obsolete illustrations which are great insofar as relating preliminary ideas to lay patients. The same sort of thing was carried on in B.J.'s day. Nerve interference was not cold — it was hot. And he insisted on it so long as he was alive. But we know today that it's just the opposite. Dermatological interference causes a cold spot, and this lack of vasodilatative responsiveness is what we're looking at. A Japanese fellow, with equipment we as a profession won't pay for, has proven that interference is cold. In 100% of pleurisy cases he tested there is cold at corresponding segmental levels of nerve distribution. In other words, our old Merric system is anatomically accurate."

The Chiropractic Future

"So all we have to do — and think about this job — is take Stevenson's, and all the other chiropractic textbooks that have outdated, outmoded means of communication, and convert them to modern terminology. I have no qualm dropping the term 'mental impulse' for 'qualitative factor', because then the scientific and educational communities will believe me. So, the ACA-CCE say, 'Get rid of our dogma!'; but if we're not careful we'll throw the baby out with the bath water. Our archaic terminology translated into current nomenclature is no longer dogma. And that's the crux of chiropractic."

"And what should we be researching? Neurology. And the effect our work at the spinal joint articulation has on the neurology."

"As a matter of fact — and this is a funny story — when I was doing work at CMCC I was organizing graduate chiropractors from five colleges to do research studies on different patients. Talk about impossible; they were completely at war. There was one problem case in which we just could not clear out the interference of this patient, and I asked Henry Gillette to come up and give us his analysis. Well, Henry started out only as Henry can, palpating clear up on top of the scalp and working his way all over the place. Then Henry looked at me and said, 'Why, I'd adjust the second toe on this patient's right-foot.' I

said, 'Oh, Henry, for God's sake, be reasonable about this.' 'That's what I find!' 'All right, then, do your thing on that second toe.' So, Henry did adjust that second toe. And when we layed the kid down and did our instrument analysis on him there was no interference we could find. Now how many second toes are you going to adjust? Not very many let me guarantee you. But all the rest of us had done nothing for this patient at the spinal joint articulation."

"You see we don't have the key yet. I couldn't tell you today, looking at the placement of cold spots on a reading by a two channel instrument such as the *synchrotherm*, where I would want to begin adjusting. We don't have the research. Nothing. Just argument. To correct a given neuropathy I may need to do a toggle along with a diversified move on a thoracic, and maybe a Logan basic contact, too. If the neuropathy is extinguished by these then all of these adjustments were specific. Now you try and tell that to a Grostic man or someone else, and they'll tell you you're line of drive was wrong, or your x-ray analysis was incorrect. No research, just argument. Specificity is a moment to moment quality lying within the nervous system of the patient."

"Now, I wouldn't have said this ten years ago, but with the proper method of analysis I must also be qualified in the three modes of adjusting: cleavage, which is toggle or a thrust; leverage, which are the rolls; and pressure, which is Logan or other comparable technique. If you are expert in each of these I guarantee you'll have more patients than you'll be able to handle."

Beacon: "In order to apply these techniques, how do we find the neuropathy?"

Dr. Himes: "Well, first of all we need more advanced instruments. But even if you use your NCM or Thermeter to look for cold spots, and then adjust into the warm side, you'll begin to improve your record of success. Come in on the warm side *always*. . . I said 'always', that is not true. You may find a patient not responding to adjusting on the warm side and realize you have an exception. Because of the complexity of the system we are dealing with, 'Always' should not be part of our vocabulary."

Private Practice

Dr. Himes: "Private practice was a fantastic story. Those were unbelievable times, too. We chiropractors were in and out of court all the time, victims of subversive intrapment. You never knew when your next patient was actually an AMA-Chicago Tribune quackery investigator, who would give you his case history, pay for your services, and then cart you off to court. I had a friend named Canaba who was arrested fifty-two times in two years. The judge finally said to him, 'Mr. Canaba, if I ever see your face in this court again I'm going to put you in jail for a long, long time.' I guess he saw the writing on the walls, because he went down to practice in Daytona Beach, and his daughter is still there."

"Talk about *fight*? They just couldn't beat us. But we never fought among ourselves — except for us straights against the mixers. In 1935 the AMA put into operation it's 'Twenty-five Year Plan' for the osteopaths, in which guys, in effect, slapped osteopaths on the back and said, 'Gee, what you guys can do with your hands is marvellous. Why don't you do more?' Soon osteopaths were delivering children; and as soon as they started that they needed a medical license. It's the same glory road the CCE is on today. Now, I'm not saying what practitioners who support CCE do is wrong, but they shouldn't do it under a chiropractic license."

"Anyway, so you know when the

first osteopath got his medical degree? It was 1960. Exactly twenty-five years after the Twenty-five Year Plan was put into effect. In their own words the AMA said, 'And if it hadn't been for 'Old Whiskers' up on Brady Hill, we would have had the chiropractors, too!'"

Scope of Practice

"Every constellation of a disease entity involves the neuropathic element. You have, perhaps, symptoms of the febrile state, malaise, headache, what have you; but always the causative neuropathic factor. My favorite illustration of the stress pattern of disease and the causative factor, is that of Franklin Roosevelt and his polio. He landed on a warship out in the middle of the Atlantic after a long tour of the Navy. He's exhausted and it's hot as Hades on the deck, but he dives into the ocean for a swim. And that North Atlantic is cold as ice. Anyhow, three hours after his swim, Roosevelt's in sickbay with fever, chills, and polio. Where did this polio come from? What we have here is a constellation comprised of the overly exhausted individual, the blazing temperature of the day, and the sudden change of body temperature as he plunged into the water. All of these were circumstances of stress contributing to the causation of a picture of disease. No medical doctor or scientist will argue with you on that point."

"In every constellation of disease there is the neuropathic element, which chiropractors alone are concerned with. If we can remove this factor, the disease constellation will no longer be complete — this is what makes us great. Visualized in this perspective the idea is so simple. This is also why we are so stupid to have so many fractionalizations from one philosophy called chiropractic."

Contributions at Palmer

Beacon: "How did you return to Palmer?"

Dr. Himes: "In 1946 I became extremely ill and left my practice to become a patient at the B.J. Palmer clinic. This process at his clinic meant becoming the personal property of one B.J. Palmer. My illness was not confining, however, and I was asked to instruct a few classes. Afterward, I began to accept in succession every job I swore I wouldn't take, and I began my love affair and conflict with B.J. in earnest; until I finally accepted the position of Head of the Technique Department, which was in a shambles."

"A relationship with B.J. was quite an affair, to say the least. He was a man of incredible discipline. B.J. was up at four every morning and completed a full days work before I was through with breakfast. Absolutely nothing escaped his eagle-eye. I swear, when he would be home soon from vacation there was something in the air that said the old man was due. He would put on a white glove and wipe it across the pipes along the basement ceiling, where we had the technique rooms, and if they were dirty — oh, boy, would somebody catch Hell. The floors of the B.J. clinic; no doubt about it; you could eat off them. They shone like glass."

"At any rate, the state of the technique department was deplorable, and the head of it caught the brunt of abuse from all directions. Classes in adjusting other than Atlas-Axis were spit on by students, and were lowest on the totem pole. Students cared nothing for them. What's more, if they claimed they were upper cervical practitioners no one forced them to learn full-spine. Well, I took this same abuse myself for several years, then got sick of it and took the argument to B.J. himself. I told him that it would never hold up in a court of law that chiropractic was defined as nothing more than Atlas-Axis, and that eventually you'd loose chiropractic if you said this, and therefore we ought to teach full-spine correctly. Some-

how, strangely enough, the Old Man bought every bit of what I said. As a result, on January 1, 1956, the change in policy was established. I have it in print that I was responsible for this change myself, not Dave Palmer."

Contemporary Politics

"Well the past has always been a part of politics, and chiropractic politics have always been dirty. You can't blame some people for feeling the way they have about things. For example, take Dave Palmer and the way B.J.'s and Vinton Logan's relationship changed in the late fifties. At first B.J. called Logan Basic "Butt Technique", but in one of the final Lyceums, with himself, Logan and Dave on stage in front of thousands of people, B.J. threw his arm around Vinton Logan and said, "By God, I wish I had had a son like you." You can't blame Dave. And in 1960, the last year B.J. was ambulatory, he could only go as far as the Lyceum tent to give the "State of the College Address". He asked Vinton Logan to give it instead. And what a masterful job he did, too."

"Vinton and I were great friends. In those years he and I travelled to as many as six chiropractic gatherings a year to speak on the same program. We had a friendly argument ongoing from his, obviously, Logan perspective, that a straight spine was a healthy spine; and my reply "Now, come on, Vint, a healthy spine is one free of nerve interference, whether straight or not." "Yeah, well, darn it, Himes — " "Well, its great if it's also a straight spine — " and so on. And at the last he conceded I was right."

Beacon: "Could you discuss the FSCC, modern Straights, and more politics?"

Dr. Himes: FSCC is part of this new SCASA organization. — I applaud the fact that SCASA is an accrediting body that is Straight but refuses to allow domination of it by any professional political organization. Let me say I don't like their definition of chiropractic, they need a great deal more on it. I see them as determined to win — or else — to become an accrediting body for Straight colleges. They can succeed by winning state to state, as was done by chiropractors in the past, if they can heal the fractionalization and stop the arm-chair philosophers like Reggie Gold, Fellieseba, ecetera. Now, these men are good motivators but they aren't philosophers. In my opinion, a philosopher has to be progressive and in front. You can't just sit back in the 1940's memorizing old concepts, and nomenclature, promoting old standards, and memorizing B.J. I mean that's *forty years* ago! It just doesn't fit today. Our definition of the old subluxation, our definition of adjustment, our definition of most things must change. Otherwise, we — a small group — will be relegated to the dogma trash-heap."

Beacon: "Do you believe the Straight movement is a positive step for the profession?"

Dr. Himes: "I said when B.J. died that we had to create an accrediting body untied to any political affiliations. ADIO, Sherman, and the rest are supposed to be sacrificing their own identities of straight chiropractic, and their recruiting of same, for a more beneficial definition of Straight chiropractic through SCASA."

"But Reggie Gold and others have done nothing but hinder the profession, except in motivating the lay public into chiropractor's offices. Well, this is a good place to stop. I can't hack it any more."

Previously, Dr. Himes is in an extremely poor state of health. The Beacon would like to thank him for the sacrifice he made in giving us this interview, and extend to him our sincerest best wishes, and thanks on behalf of the Palmer College of Chiropractic and the entire chiropractic profession.