



Where Is Chiropractic Headed?

By E.L. Crowder, D.C., Ph.C.

Editor's note: E.L. Crowder, D.C., is the former vice president for development of Palmer College. He was a featured speaker at Lyceum '86. His article, Where is Chiropractic Headed?, is an excerpt from his speech and is the second of a three-part series being printed in Straight From Sherman.

Where is chiropractic headed?

This is the question which has nagged and bedeviled us for about two decades. We are preoccupied by the question, but frustrated in the search for answers. Why are we so frustrated? Perhaps because our professional conscience is nearly insolvent. Since B.J. died, our professional leadership has changed any number of times.

At the present time, our chiropractic leaders are somewhere between a crisis and a catastrophe. Time is running out. Somehow or other, we have gotten our priorities off track. What we desperately need is to improve our thinking to give ourselves accurate perception, and to divorce ourselves from benevolent deception.

The agony of success has aroused in our ranks three concerns now traveling like wildfire and equally dangerous to our future:

1. Fear of NOT gaining hospital staff privileges.
2. Fear of losing chiropractic to other disciplines which use manipulation as a form of treatment.
3. Fear of being restricted because of a non-expanding scope of practice.

Have you considered the consequences of these issues? Have our leaders considered the consequences? Where do you stand? Where do our leaders stand? What are you going to do about it?

Today's concerns seem to be quite disrelated to our principles. Let's discuss why.

First, we have a fear of the loss of chiropractic to other disciplines presently incorporating manipulations in their practices.

Anything really good is bound to be copied, so if we are as good as we say we are, we should heed Franklin Roosevelt's statement of the 1930s: "The only thing we have to fear is fear itself."

We should thrust forward, honing our skills and abilities to the highest possible level, leaving our imitators far behind.

Second, the matter of a non-expanding scope of practice. The more scope of practice, the less attention to the basic philosophical framework upon which chiropractic was founded. The more we push ourselves into the expertise of other disciplines, the greater the chance for intrusion into that which we call our own. But the real danger

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comes in that falling for everything we become good for nothing.

Third, somehow or other we have created a fear of failure to gain hospital staff privileges. To me, it seems having hospital privileges to the extent desired by some of our alleged leaders would bring about an oil and water relationship. Oil and water do not mix. Chiropractic and medicine should not be mixed. Each deserves due and separate respect.

Will there be mutual respect and appropriate use of chiropractic under the hospital

roof? It isn't conceivable—**unless** there is compromise. And who would do the compromising? Chiropractic, in the bastion of the medically based and oriented hospital.

Have you read the recently approved hospital chiropractic residency requirements, especially the rotating schedule of practical learning subjects? Let me quickly review them:

Rehabilitative medicine
Radiology
Neurology
Chiropractic orthopedics
Biomechanics and gait analysis
Cardiology
Socio-economic relationships
... and internal medicine.

This list is for chiropractors. Where's the list for medical personnel so they will understand chiropractic?

And yet, given today's chiropractic and medical climate, these three fears can set the stage for the demise of chiropractic in as little as 10 years.

There are three principles which students of history will recognize and appreciate. They are said to establish the climate for totalitarianism defined as, "A state in which one group maintains complete control and illegalizes all others." Even now, the power in our profession is being concentrated in one group.

Is chiropractic repeating history? Power corrupts and absolute power corrupts absolutely. Think on it, and think how each of the three is corrupting the very fibre of chiropractic.

1. Big Business

Today's U.S. health care expenditures are huge—10.6 percent of our entire gross national product. In perspective, the national defense is 6.4 percent of the G.N.P. The dollar is king.

2. Big Government

Our dependence on government entitlement

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ment and third party payers can hardly be overstated.

3. Big Military

The network for health care surveillance and regulation is unprecedented. Chiropractic may not survive as a health service with benefits distinct from other disciplines.

I challenge our chiropractic leaders to have a commitment without compromise to the chiropractic principle. I challenge you to select chiropractic leadership with strength and direction to protect our great philosophy, science and art.

Never forget for one single instant—the nature of the kingdom is the nature of the king!

Today's temptation is too much for the chiropractor who is weak of spirit and lacks the Big Idea. It makes me shudder in my chiropractic boots.

E.A. Morinis, a doctor of philosophy in British Columbia, is a sociologist who is

In Memoriam

Thomas B. Bartlett, D.C.

Dr. Thomas B. Bartlett of Washington, D.C., died February 13 at his home. Dr. Bartlett was active in the profession serving as a Sherman College regent for four terms, being an active member of the Federation of Straight Chiropractic Organizations, serving as representative for the International Chiropractors Association, and serving on the District of Columbia Board of Chiropractic Examiners.

He graduated from Palmer College in 1959 and had earlier earned a bachelor of science degree at Lafayette College. He practiced more than 25 years.

As one of his patients, John Q. Aukward, said, he was admired for his dedication to his profession and his patients. Another couple, Mr. and Mrs. Joseph R. Warman, write: "Dr. Bartlett was not only a fine doctor but also a friend to his many patients. It gives us great pleasure to remember him through a gift to an institution which will perpetuate the good he has done through his chosen vocation."

Both Bartlett and his daughter, Betsy Bartlett, D.C., showed great interest in Sherman College and supported the college because it "continues to expose as many as possible to the chiropractic health concept," said the late Bartlett several years ago.

Dr. Thomas Gelardi, president of Sherman College said, "Dr. Bartlett's dedication, humility and willingness to serve our profession will be an inspiration to me always."

The family asks that memorial contributions be made to Sherman College, Development Office, P.O. Box 1452, Spartanburg, S.C. 29304.

exceptionally qualified to give an objective opinion about chiropractic and its relationship to the other health disciplines. I am going to quote liberally from his published article in the *Journal of the Canadian Chiropractic Association* of September 1980. The article was based on a talk given by Dr. Morinis to the Canadian Memorial Chiropractic College Alumni Association in 1979.

He put his ability and reputation on the line by having his article published. In his fashion, he made his own prediction for the future of chiropractic. Many of his ideas have already come to pass so it is likely other projections he made will also come true.

Under the heading: "Re-examine the place of a philosophy in practice," Morinis wrote:

"Chiropractic theory has become a secret doctrine. It is something learned, respected and revered, but little practiced. The social pressure from medicine has brought technique to the forefront and Philosophy has slipped back as a result.

"There are two main implications of the demise of chiropractic philosophy—the first is the disappearance of that which is distinctively chiropractic. Having already begun to lose the exclusive practice of spinal manipulation to allopaths and physiotherapists, only the chiropractic philosophy significantly distinguishes the chiropractic practitioner. And yet the philosophy is kept hidden away.

"Dispossessed of its philosophy, chiropractic is dispossessed of its uniqueness and perhaps, its future. For fear of being labelled quacks, chiropractors have generally diminished the role of philosophy in their practice, and as a result, it seems to me, have themselves lost faith in the philosophy."

The second implication is, "Healers without confidence in their own methods are unlikely to achieve the full potential of their method, knowing as we do there is much more to healing than mechanics," said Morinis.

Then he quotes Paracelsus who centuries ago wrote what could be an indictment of today's chiropractor, "The physician who has no faith can be nothing but an ignoramus and quack, even if he had graduated in all the medical colleges in the world and knew the contents of all the medical books that were ever written."

Morinis goes on by saying, "A discrepancy between what one holds to be true and what one does must be squarely faced, and resolved, if the practitioner is to be transformed from technician into healer."

Aren't we falling into the same rut as medicine already has? Years ago, the general practitioner who came to your grandparents' or parents' house had relatively few tricks in

his little black bag. Just a few nostrums and pain killers that somehow or other did the trick, thanks to that one other overwhelmingly important something—that horse and buggy doctor had faith and conviction he was a healer.

Where's the faith in today's medical specialties? There's very little or none. Now, it's a matter of body mechanics. Hearts are being changed like sparkplugs. If the old oil in the engine isn't doing the trick, let's change it with any other prescription that's just come out. And isn't that where chiropractic is heading, too?

We seem so worried about techniques and making a buck. We seem so concerned about the right club to belong to. We seem so involved with ourselves in our "me too" world that we truly have lost the Big Idea... of innate... of chiropractic philosophy... of our professional authenticity. We have become our own sacrificial lamb on the altar of greed and power.

I am reminded of a truth that says: there is a big difference between a good doctor and bad doctor, but there's little difference between a good doctor and no doctor at all.

The unfortunate part is *chiropractic is the process of being lost and we are its own worst enemy* because of individual apathy and disregard for the fundamentals which are the very core, the very heart and soul of D.D. Palmer's discovery in 1895.

Our chiropractic worth is rooted in history. The history of our profession is rich the heritage of the Palmers. But there we have many others too. No single man makes history. History cannot be seen, just as grass cannot be seen grow. But when that grass is rich and green we see its innate beauty and are pleased.

Why should we not hold that same high regard for the magnificence of chiropractic we are so dangerously close to losing that to the drought of leadership and the fact that most of us don't even bother to tend our own chiropractic lawns.

What can we do? To whom can we turn? What's the first step? The answers are within you—and only you. Each of us like blades of grass must combine to form the lawn. We are involved, but get involved the right way, the only way. Personal professional image begins at home and in your practice.

Because you are a chiropractor, you are chiropractic to everyone with whom you have contact. Therefore, you must have a self-image based on the credibility of a professional in a credible profession.

Let us always remember that chiropractic is not so much of an inheritance as it is an achievement. Our true inheritance lies in our ability to make and shape chiropractic that it will survive for all time to come. It is we who become the creators of our professional destiny.