California MEDICINE

For information on preparation of manuscript, see advertising page 2

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EDITORIAL

A Million Dollars for Medical Education

CASH CONTRIBUTIONS to medical schools in the United States made by the California Medical Association in the past ten years have come to almost a million dollars.

Medical schools throughout the country, along with everybody else, have suffered in recent years from the effects of inflation. The costs of educating students have risen in proportion with other costs. Salaries have advanced, equipment and building costs have grown and expenses in all departments have followed the upward trend of general prices.

Coupled with these increased costs, the medical schools have often found themselves facing boards of trustees of large universities where the losses on medical training cannot be adequately made up by surpluses in other colleges or by increased endowment income. In these circumstances it was not unexpected that some medical school deans announced themselves in favor of federal subsidies to medical schools.

It is fortunate that some farsighted medical educators, working in conjunction with business interests, established both the American Medical Education Foundation and the National Fund for Medical Education some ten years ago. The AMEF, whose administrative costs are paid by the American Medical Association, collects contributions from physicians and pays them out to the medical schools. The same procedure is followed by the National Fund, except that its source of income is business and industry.

The California Medical Association was among the earliest state medical organizations to grasp the significance of these funds and to arrange to support them. Under the California program, each member of the Association contributes a small sum each year as part of his C.M.A. dues. The proceeds are turned over to the AMEF, 80 per cent earmarked for the three California medical schools which are not primarily tax-supported, the balance for the general fund to go equally to all medical schools.

While the contribution of the individual member (ten dollars a year, tax-deductible) is not great, the aggregate comes to a neat sum. In 1959, the Association contributed more than $156,000 in this manner. The three private schools in California received close to $42,000 each from this one source.

This annual effort represents medical organizations at their best—members of a profession contributing to the education of those who will follow them, even compete with them.

Medical education must be continued and must be strengthened. Federal funds which carry policy-making strings must be eschewed. The picture of today's physicians helping train tomorrow's is a pleasant sight and, we hope, a permanent monument to a graceful tradition.

Physicians and Population

"POPULATION EXPLOSION" is a term that has come into prominence in recent months.

In California, it is now quite obvious that the five medical schools in the state will not be able for some years to come to produce enough new physicians to meet the demands of a sharply increasing population.

Attention of the medical and the educational world has been focused on this problem in recent weeks through the publication of a treatise on "The West's Medical Manpower Needs." The volume comes from the Western Interstate Commission for Higher Education, popularly known as WICHE.

WICHE is the cooperative group of western educators who plan for the higher (professional) education of the youth of the 13 states making up the