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## PRESIDENTIAL ADDRESS

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San Francisco, California

By the simple process of election to the office of president of a society, the recipient of this high honor supposedly is capable of sudden metamorphosis from his former modest status to that of a learned essayist -- a wise philosopher, a knowledgeable historian, an orator possessed of keen wit and eloquence. An apology for my own obvious lack of these enviable qualities would be redundant.

Yet this moment thrusts upon me a responsibility which transcends the customary annual address of the president of the American Proctologic Society. For there are here assembled in joint meeting, members of the Section of Proctology of the Royal Society of Medicine and illustrious physicians from 55 other countries of the world.

Our prime purpose is to share and freely exchange whatever knowledge and experience we may possess, so that we may return to our homes - wherever they may be - with augmented ability to minister to the physical afflictions of the infirm. Yet, above and beyond this, there is most assuredly in the mind and in the heart of each and every one of us, the earnest desire that this assemblage will serve to further a common goal of universal peace with security, health and happiness for all the peoples of the world.

It is of this that I would speak, though only as a physician, ignorant of the ways of politics and diplomacy, of social and economic pressures within and between nations, and of the military might and rights which appear to threaten us all.

There is totally abundant evidence of internal dissension and conflict within the vast majority of nations, including the United States of America. Diverse ideologies, forms of government and religious faiths are all attacked in this pandemic plague.

It would be presumptuous, indeed, for a doctor of medicine to attempt to diagnose and treat this worldwide illness. But I would remind you that for almost 2,000 years, world population is estimated to have remained at approximately 200,000,000 and, in less than 100 years, it had increased to an estimated 2,000,000,000 in the year 1930, and 3,000,000,000 in the year 1960. The spectacular advancement in medical knowledge in the past hundred years must have contributed significantly to this population explosion. If this be true, the medical profession is burdened with a considerable responsibility for many of the fundamental problems of social, economic and political upheaval which have resulted from this explosive increase in human life.

For the ultimate solution of these many problems, there exists both an obligation and a great opportunity for the men of medicine throughout the world. People everywhere trust physicians, and they recognize the fact that the health and welfare of all persons, irrespective of ethnic origin, are the common goal of the medical profession. Doctors can contribute more to good will, understanding and friendship than all the political diplomats of the world.

This assemblage bears testimony to a common desire to speak and act in behalf of scientific truth, humanitarian service, the freedom and dignity of everyone and the cause of world peace.

Every member of the American Proctologic Society shares the sincere desire to develop even greater friendship and understanding between physician-citizens of all nations.

Of necessity, each of the speakers on the scientific program has been limited to a very brief allotment of time, but it is anticipated and hoped that during the more leisurely periods of social activities which have been planned, everyone will take full advantage of the opportunity to mingle and meet as many as possible of those in attendance, to the furtherance of closer acquaintanceship and friendship to which this meeting is dedicated.

Thus, may be strengthen the bonds of brotherhood in a profession dedicated to humanitarian service, to the dignity and welfare of all and to the cause of peace.

May God be with you all.

(Presented at the joint meeting of the American Proctologic Society and the Section of Proctology of the Royal Society of Medicine, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, May 9-14, 1964)