

Chapter Four

MEDICAL DICTATOR

IN THE *JOURNAL of the American Medical Association* of April 18, 1942, Morris Fishbein, the editor, takes the credit for having influenced the Food and Drug Department to make its attacks on Dr. Koch.

It has been Morris Fishbein and his cohorts, then, who have attempted to keep the medical men ignorant of the truth concerning the Koch Treatment and thus denied the use of this Therapy to the general public. Hundreds of doctors, however, have spurned the stigma, which the AMA bosses would attach to them for using the Treatment, and have gone right on helping the sick in a way never thought possible with some of the so-called orthodox treatments “approved” by the medical hierarchy.

The Case of Dr. Koch is not alone in the advancement of American science, which has felt the wrath of Morris Fishbein, the medical dictator. The American people have awakened to a considerable extent to the menace of communism, to the ruthlessness of some union bosses, to the abuses of trusts and capitalism. The public, however, is not aware that the AMA has the most ruthless, heartless, and diabolically clever leaders of any strong-arm union in the world! These men turn cold shoulder to suffering humanity, which they purport to serve! If greed determines their opposition to some type of therapy, then they cruelly smear and misrepresent the sponsor of such therapy. They use their vast means of propaganda through the control over practically every medical journal in America, and the many leading lay publications. These men, then, are more dangerous to America than any leader in any other closed shop in the country! They deal with the health of the people. They try to convince the Government and the public that anything, which does not have their “seal of approval” is something, which is fraudulent or a brazen piece of quackery. Thus, they would control all scientific progress in the medical arts and turn up not only their noses but also slander and smear any progress made outside the confines of their narrow bigotry.

Dr. Bremer of Germany took sixty long years of his life to attempt to convince the medical profession that air was a good thing for the sick. Then, all of a sudden, others in the medical profession seized the new idea and many patients were nearly frozen to death in tents and open-air buildings so they would get plenty of fresh air.

After Dr. Bremer forced the medical doctors to recognize the value of fresh air, the AMA hurriedly sent one of their most distinguished members up into the rarified air of the Adirondacks on a quest for scientific knowledge. The doctor “discovered” that pure, fresh air was not injurious, but of great benefit to the sick. So American medicine took credit for the discovery of a man who fought for years to aid humanity and his profession.

We shall see in a later Chapter that the same leaders in medicine are attempting to import the Koch Treatment from a foreign country by very subtle means, taking credit for introducing it into the United States, while Dr. Koch has been wearing himself out for almost forty years to teach, instruct, and debate, the value of his Theories which have been borne out so well in the Clinic.

When they could no longer argue with Dr. Koch on the basis of facts, then they used a group of “opinion witnesses” who had no experience or understanding of it, to condemn it and so to cause the Federal Court in Detroit to issue an injunction against Dr. Koch, which made it practically impossible for him to even answer his enemies, smearers, and attackers, without being liable to violation of the law. This, unfortunately, is the state of affairs in medicine in America. If you cannot answer a scientist with counter-scientific arguments, then use your governmental influence to get an injunction against your opponent. That will stop him from daring to debate your own narrow medical views. That will put an end to his impudence in daring to defy the great powers which would like to control or commercialize all medical thought in America.

When the AMA was formed in 1847 it was purely a social and scientific organization. Its founders intended it for this purpose, and it is still believed to be so by many of its members. In those early days the AMA never dreamed of going into the trust, monopoly, or shakedown business.

Around the turn of the century, at an AMA Convention in St. Paul, Minnesota, a trio of medical politicians conceived the idea of forming a closed corporation for their own mutual benefit. At this time the idea of a medical dictator was born.

Dr. George H. Simmons, then an advertising quack, Dr. J. N. McCormack of Kentucky, and a certain Dr. Reed were the founders. A Charter was procured in Springfield, Illinois, by which the three were made absolute, in the affairs of the Association, as practically all non-profit Corporation Charters do. A Constitution and Bylaws were drawn up and ratified by a future convention under which it looked as though the members themselves had a voice in the conduct of the Association. It must be remembered though that a Charter and a Constitution are two different things.

In the beginning of this power group, Simmons was general manager, secretary, and editor. McCormack was social worker and Reed was the “legislative works” or lobbyist. These three medical misfits proceeded to form a political steamroller at the head of the body with a smaller political machine in every state in the Union.

In 1912, Rush Medical College graduated a young man by the name of Morris Fishbein. Bealle * tells the story of Fishbein briefly, as follows:

“How he (Fishbein) got his degree is of no moment here. The fact remains that he got it. And how he procured his medical license is still another story. Classmates claim he was very irregular in his attendance and was generally hustling about trying to find additional ways to gather in the coin of the realm. Others say that when he entered medical college, he had been practicing to become a circus acrobat, or tumbler.

(* *MEDICAL MUSSOLINI*, Morris A. Bealle, Columbia Publishing Co., Washington, D. C., p. 30 ff.)

“After receiving his diploma, Fishbein spent five months as an intern at Durand Hospital, then resigned to take a position under Dr. Simmons as publicity man for the American Medical

Association. (Please note that all other medical graduates ARE REQUIRED to serve two-year internships in some ‘accredited’ hospital.)

“For awhile Fishbein was practically Simmons’ office boy. Then Simmons got into trouble when he tried to get rid of his wife by ‘framing’ her on an insanity charge. She proved in court that he had made a dope addict of her. It was brought out also that he was the biggest advertiser the medical profession had ever had and that he boldly and brazenly advertised ‘a limited number of lady patients can be accommodated at my residence.’

“The trial raised such a furor that Simmons realized it would be to his own advantage to publicly withdraw from AMA activities. He did. And in his place, set up his young stooge and student, Morris Fishbein. This happened in 1924.

“Fishbein proved an able politician and businessman. But his accession to editorship of the *AMA Journal* was a travesty on modern medicine, since he had never practiced medicine a day in his life. Furthermore, he had no possible way of knowing the problems of the bedside physician or of the honest physician, who has to make ends meet when collections are poor and patients scarce.

“Fishbein discovered ways to dig money out of manufacturers and advertisers that Simmons had never dreamed of. And though the dignity of the medical profession suffered and its prestige took a horrible beating, Fishbein continued to rake in the money for himself and Simmons—and the Organization. The million dollars a year that is dug out of the earnings of the small practitioners, who must join the AMA or suffer ostracism and ‘whispering’ at the hands of their fellows, is only part of the loot.

“Fishbein works on the theory that he is safe so long as he can show that ‘the affairs of the organization are prosperous.’ That his Medical Chamber of Commerce is prosperous no one denies—if we consider worldly goods, obtained in the ways, which would make a yeggman blush with shame, a gauge of prosperity.

“The Medical Chamber of Commerce now has the richest medical graft in the world, owns \$2,074,807.19 in real estate, buildings and equipment; \$2,511,309.16 in gilt-edged bonds, a bank vault full of cash, a half dozen medical journals, controls 35 or more and did a business of \$1,880,135.90 in the year 1942.

“As to being ‘progressive’ it can take a bow there too. That is, if you include in the category of progress an agenda which attempts to do all the medical publishing, to control all the medical offices, to dictate to all the medical colleges and hospitals, to control all medical teaching, advertising, and manufacturing, to dominate all public health boards, and the medical journals, and on the side, goes into the job of printing, book publishing, paper selling, office furniture, sticker making, button manufacturing, and numerous other commercial pursuits.

“As I have noted, Dr. Simmons proved an able politician and a good racketeer, but the young office boy has far outstripped the tutor. In fact, he has made himself very unpopular with a good many doctors within the ranks of the Association. He has even gone so far as to not only

organize but also print at intervals a “black list” of those doctors and manufacturers who have incurred his ill will.

“Morris Fishbein recently sold a series of alleged health articles to the Scripps-Howard News Syndicate. At the bottom of each article, he exhorted his readers to ‘clip this out and become your own doctor.’

“Even though the public doesn’t know that Fishbein never practiced medicine a day in his life, and is not qualified to advise the layman, much less the doctor, on how to treat the sick; any intelligent man or woman is aware that you cannot treat in a standardized manner by tumbling through newspaper clippings. Any intelligent layman is bound to think less of the medical profession after reading these bought-and-paid-for blurbs, written by the nation’s supposedly ‘leading’ medical man.

“The *Journal of the AMA*, and many of the thirty-two State Medical Journals which are controlled by Dr. Fishbein, and are chock-full of advertising, as the high-pressure sales force of the Cooperative Medical Advertising Bureau at Chicago, can put in them. Much stress is laid on the business end of healing. In fact, the Medical Directory carries a ‘Purchaser’s Index’ which seems to say to the public ‘Buy only from those who come across.’

“The art of healing is about the last thing in the world that should place dollars first. Many honorable and capable physicians agree on this point and put it into effect in their own practices. There are many hundreds of real physicians in this country who have thousands of dollars ‘on the books’—overdue and unpaid bills from poor people who probably will never be able to pay. Yet, if one of these doctors is called to attend a patient in dire need of help, he will not hesitate to get out of his bed in the middle of a cold winter night, and administer to him—knowing that he will never get a cent for it.

“But the public does not know this. What it does know is that if the ‘head doctor’ of the country does not collect for an advertisement, the advertiser will be dunned by collection agencies and sued by AMA lawyers. His product will be “knocked” by as many doctors as will repeat the Fishbein slander in the Medical Journals, and he will never get another inch of space until he settles up.

“The most spectacular example, in recent years, of the Medical Mussolini’s persistent penchant for putting dollars ahead of the public health was the amebic dysentery epidemic in Chicago during the World’s Fair of 1933. Although Fishbein’s high-powered Propaganda Department was able to keep most of this sorry story out of the newspapers, it didn’t succeed in completely smothering it. Of those publications that knew about it, only the magazine *Time* had the courage to tell the truth about what amounted to wholesale murder by the officers of the AMA and the Chicago Board of Health.

“According to a belated report by the latter, an epidemic of amebic dysentery centered around the Congress Hotel, in the summer of 1933. The plumbing in the hotel was believed by the Board to be one of the causes, also it was thought that certain of the kitchen employees weren’t exactly clean and were carriers of the disease—a disease which completely wrecks the health and is fatal

fifty percent of the time. Now, the Chicago Board of Health was then in charge of a medico-politician and politico-medical man named Bundesen, who ran for Governor in 1936, on the strength of his ignorance of health matters.

“The World’s Fair was really a Big Business. All told, 39,052,236 visitors from all parts of the United States paid the 50-cent admission charge, and spent many times that amount at the various concessions. This doesn’t include many millions spent in the Chicago hotels, restaurants, stores, and so on.

“Had the Chicago Board of Health been a board of health instead of a commercio-political subdivision, steps would have at once been taken to check this spread of dysentery immediately upon its discovery. Had Morris Fishbein considered the American Medical Association a medical association, instead of a politico-commercial racket, he would have seen that this was done,

“But, no! This might stop a few visitors from coming to Chicago and leaving some good money with those business interests, which support the Chamber of Commerce and advertise in the medical journals. So what did they do?

“The Board of Health just postponed action until the last visitor had passed through the World’s Fair turnstiles and until the last visitor had paid his bill and checked out of his hotel. Fishbein kept quiet and thus permitted hundreds of visitors to spread amebic dysentery all over the United States.

“It was not until after some wealthy lumber barons who had attended a lumber convention in Chicago at the Congress Hotel contracted the disease and died that *Time* gave the story to the world.

“The dysentery incident alone is enough to justify every medical doctor in the country calling for a clean-up of the Association if he doesn’t want things to get so bad in a few years that a Senate or House Investigating Committee will do it for them.

“And if a Committee of Congress ever turns loose on this esteemed Association, and learns how it is now being used by Fishbein as an instrumentality to pull in the shekels by any means through which they can be pulled in, it will wash so much dirty linen that the 15% who now go to medical doctors for medical treatment, will be reduced to about 15% of the present number.”

The manner in which the American Medical Association became an autocracy is in itself an illuminating chapter in the history of dictatorships. The public is indebted to an editorial, which appeared in the *Illinois Medical Journal* for December 1922. This publication is the organ of the Illinois Medical Society, and is one of the few component parts of the Medical Dictatorship, which has always had the courage to speak out and protest against any usurpation of power by medical racketeers. The article is entitled, “THE AMA BECOMES AN AUTOCRACY.” It is indeed gratifying to note that some doctors of the AMA had the courage to come out and tell the true facts regarding the Simmons’ influence, which was perpetuated more strongly than ever by his protégé, Morris Fishbein. Let us remember that Fishbein controlled all funds of the American

Medical Association. In 1910 Simmons had the Constitution changed and the Charter amended to provide for this very thing. By controlling all funds of the Association, by making the President and the Treasurer mere figureheads, Fishbein had as much power in the Association as Mussolini had in Italy, Hitler had in Germany, or Stalin had in Russia.

Here is the editorial from the *Illinois Medical Journal*. It may look too long to read, but it is so revealing because of its source, that a proper understanding of the AMA must behoove the reader to indulge its length.

‘THE AMA BECOMES AN AUTOCRACY’

“The Journal management (then George Simmons, but now Morris Fishbein) dictates the ways in which the Association’s money shall be spent. The editor of the *Journal* has assumed the functions of General Manager of the Association and, ex-officio, of every physician in the United States. Such despotic authority was never conferred upon him, either by the House of Delegates or by the physicians themselves.

“When the reorganization plan was adopted (1902) it provided for the first time for a House of Delegates, and stated specifically that this should be the legislative and fiscal body of the Association, and that the funds of the Association should be appropriated by the House of Delegates. Today the Editor of the *Journal of the AMA* and his Board of Trustees have nullified the House of Delegates and have assumed the right to make appropriations for the entire Association.

“The editor of the *Journal* has assumed, entirely without warrant, that he is the general manager of the Association, and not of the *Journal* only. The President of the AMA has been degraded into a mere automaton where control of the organization is concerned, with even this puerile power of ‘recommendation’ for appointment further weakened by the power of the veto, assumed by the Board of Trustees.

“The policy of the present management of the AMA has been and is the accumulation of money for the erection of buildings and to make a big showing for the *Journal*. This feature has been worked overtime while the economic welfare of the individual physician and the profession at large has received a minimum, if any, attention.

“Here is where the AMA falls down with a vengeance. Instead of serving the individual doctors of the Association as a great labor organization stands up for its members, the AMA does nothing to help physicians maintain their economic position in society.

“Since the reorganization it is apparent that the management of the AMA prefers to take its advice from men out of touch with the daily needs of the profession. The struggling doctor is left to fight his own way unaided.

“Few of the members of the AMA realize the centralizing changes that have taken place in their organization within the last twenty-five years. So adroitly and insidiously have these changes been brought about that the majority of members, even those best informed regarding the

organization, have been so dazzled by the material prosperity of the AMA that they have entirely overlooked the fact that, during this period of expansion, the Association has been converted from a democratic and self-governed body of professional men into a highly centralized machine with absolute control concentrated in a single individual.

“The majority of attacks which have been made on the management of the Association during this time have been directed entirely at the editor of the *Journal*. These attacks have been futile and have been welcomed by the management for the reason that these criticisms have diverted the attention from the gradual steady absorption of all the authority and control of the organization.

“By 1901, the *Journal* had developed to a point where reorganization seemed necessary. It is significant that the Financial Statement for this year was headed, Report of the Trustees of the *Journal of the AMA*.’

“This reorganization plan for the first time provided for the delegate body to be known as the House of Delegates. It provided for the following officers: President, four Vice-Presidents, a Secretary, a Treasurer, and nine Trustees. It stated specifically that the House of Delegates should be the legislative and fiscal body of the Association and that the funds of the Association should be appropriated by the House of Delegates. At present, the editor of the *Journal* and the Board of Trustees attend not only to appropriating the funds but also to most of the other functions of the House of Delegates.

“The new By-laws further provided that all matters of the Association pertaining to the expenditure of moneys (that is, money for other purposes than the publication of the *Journal*), shall be referred to the Board of Trustees, who shall make a report of the same within twenty-four hours, and if the House of Delegates orders the expenditure of money, the payments shall be made by the Treasurer.

“It will be seen from the above that the reorganization plan specifically gave the power of appropriating money to the House of Delegates; that the function of the Board of Trustees were purely advisory and that the action of the House of Delegates in appropriating money was final. Any claims, therefore, that the present method of controlling finances of the AMA were approved by the Association at the time of the reorganization in 1901, are entirely without foundation as shown by the official records.

“At that time, the only source of revenue of the Association was the *Journal* and the only purpose for which money was expended, with the exception of some slight Association expenses were the expenses of publishing the *Journal*. It was, therefore, perfectly natural that all bills should be approved by the editor and all checks signed by him.

“It was perfectly natural that, as the only responsibility of the Board of Trustees was the publication of the *Journal*, the voting of the appropriations should be left in their hands. It was early recognized by those desirous of concentrating the powers and resources of the Association THAT WHOEVER CONTROLLED THE FINANCES OF THE ASSOCIATION WOULD ULTIMATELY CONTROL THE ASSOCIATION ITSELF, since no action could be taken, no

committee function, no officers could carry on any activity, except as the necessary expenses for such purposes were authorized.

“In the twenty-five years of expansion of the Association and the *Journal*, the anomalous condition has developed whereby the *Journal*, which is the property of the Association, now absolutely controls the Association to which it belongs.

“The editor of the *Journal* has developed into an absolute DICTATOR of the Association and its affairs through his control of the finances of the Association, while the Board of Trustees of the *Journal* has been converted into a Board of Directors of the Association which now assumes to control all the activities of the Association, and even to dictate to the officers, Boards, and Committees of the Association, as to what they can do, and how they can spend the money which is the property of the Association.

“This conversion of the Association from a democracy to an absolute autocracy has been brought about so slowly and shrewdly, so surely and so persistently, that even the members of the House of Delegates themselves have not been aware of this overthrow of self-government and the substitution of an oligarchy for a rule of the members.

“These changes have resulted in converting the Board of Trustees from the supervising committee of the publication of the *Journal* into a Board of Directors of the Association which now claims the right to act on and control all activities of the Association. Another instance of the tail wagging the dog.

“What has come about, then, since 1901, is that the County Medical Societies have delegated their authority to the State House of Delegates; the State Association, through its State House of Delegates, has delegated all its authority to the House of Delegates of the AMA; the House of Delegates of the AMA has delegated all its authority to the Board of Trustees, which is now the Board of Directors, and the Board of Directors practically has delegated its authority to the editor of the *Journal*, who, as an unauthorized and self-constituted general manager of the Association, controls all of the activities, finances, and functions of the organized medical profession. A pyramid, with one man sitting on the top.

“It was recognized long ago that whoever controls the finances of the Association will control the Association. So we have, today, the anomalous and absurd situation that the *Journal*, which is the property of the Association, not only spends what money is necessary for its own expenses, but also the surplus earned by the *Journal* each year, which does not belong to the *Journal* itself but the Association, as well as all the funds of the Association itself. They are controlled by the *Journal*, so that this money cannot be used for any purpose whatever unless it is in line with the policies and plans of the editor.

“Measured from a penny-wise standpoint, that the Association has prospered, is conceded, but what relation does this temporary financial success bear towards medical ideals, and the betterment of professional conditions?

“In the latter respect, FAILURE IS COMPLETE. That the AMA had done little or nothing for

the rank and file of the profession is murmured everywhere, and not without justification. Instances galore could be cited.

“THE AMA IS NOT A BUSINESS ENTERPRISE.

“Its success is not to be gauged in dollar bills or buildings, but in what it does to benefit its member and to restrain the confidence and merit the support of physicians.

“In other words, ‘what does it profit a man if he gains the whole world and loses his own soul?’ What does it profit the AMA to accumulate land, bonds and mortgages with which to erect a whitened sepulcher for the genuine interests of the profession it was organized to safeguard?”

This exposé of the real AMA made in 1922 came just two years before Master Politician Simmons turned his scepter over to Master Business Man Fishbein and “retired” to direct the medical union from the obscurity of anonymity. Simmons prepared the Association for permanent autocratic control by himself and his stooge.

There has been no change in that control since, and, while some doctors have been led to believe that some past presidents and members of the Board of Trustees really controlled Fishbein, there is no evidence to support this belief. The last financial report of the *Journal* indicates that that magazine still controls and handles all the money of the Association. As long as the *Journal* holds the purse strings of the Association, the man who controls the *Journal* will continue to control the Association—until that power is taken away from the *Journal* or until public opinion forces the Medical Dictator out of that powerful position which affects every single person in the United States, regardless of occupation!

It is important to add the following remarks to this chapter, which did not appear in the previous editions. It is to the credit of the members of the American Medical Association that in the summer of 1949, a short time after this book first appeared, Morris Fishbein was deposed from his position by the Annual Convention of the Association.

The unusual part of this action is that Fishbein was not merely let out of his job, but that he was publicly castigated and “ordered” not to write or speak on controversial matters without permission of the House of Delegates. He was humiliated and degraded in the public eye.

New Physical Culture (now *Macfadden’s Health Review*) for January-February, 1950, stated in a review of *The Birth of A Science*, “According to reports, this book had much to do with the overthrow of Dr. Morris Fishbein, the former medical Czar who persecuted Dr. Koch since the First World War.”

It remains to be seen whether this move was sincere or not. It could have been done just to please the public, making the people think a real house cleaning is in progress. We like to believe it is sincere and that the corruption of the original purposes of the AMA by Fishbein will be stopped and a more liberal, less tyrannical attitude toward those with whom it disagrees will prevail.

In view of the Krebiozen and Dr. Andrew Ivy Case which occurred since Fishbein’s overthrow,

it appears that some of the highest AMA leaders still carry on the same tactics of Simmons and Fishbein. These recent actions have paralleled the persecution of Dr. Koch in earlier days.