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Nutrition



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# Principles of the A.N.S. Are Being Confirmed

Excerpts from Presidential Acceptance Speech delivered at the Convention.

By Robert T. Pottenger, M.D., Pasadena, Calif.

Twenty-five to thirty-five years ago, men like Dr. William Albrecht were showing that the quality of food on our soils was deteriorating with the depletion of the mineral content of the soil. Men like Dr. Ehrenfried Pfeiffer were showing that the microbic flora of the soil determined the health of plants and that microbic flora itself was dependent upon the organic content of the soil. Men like Oscar Erf were showing that the health of animals depended on soil fertility and the freshness of their feed. Dentists like Harold Hawkins were becoming aware that the conditions they were seeing in the mouth were the result of modern habits of eating. Weston Price made his monumental studies of native peoples on their own primitive diets showing magnificent bone and tooth structure. These same peoples, on the imported diets of Western civilization, showed the same degenerative conditions shown by the members of Western civilizations. The possibility of sub-clinical vitamin deficiency was recognized and new vitamins were being discovered. Dr. F. M. Pottenger, Jr., showed that there was a heat labile factor in food necessary for proper growth of bone and prevention of the development of allergies. These men, just to name a few, gave the philosophical background to our organization.

We maintain that the knowledge of what one should eat and how much is incomplete. Because of this lack of knowledge, and the prevalence of devitalized food, we as a people are badly nourished and subject to degenerative disease. Our children

do not have the physical stamina or endurance they should have. The immediate solution lies, as far as possible, in studying man in relation to his historical environment, and giving him a diet from as fertile soil as possible, as fresh as possible, and selected with an eye to the greatest benefit for the individual, and not the cheapness or ease of preparation. While we assume that we do not know all the harm done to our nutrition by the processes of modern civilization, we seize upon every advance of science to guide us in the more effective application of nutrition.

Time has vindicated most of our early principles—the importance of protein of high biological value, the need for balanced vitamin and mineral rations, the importance of the whole grains and unsaturated fats. The Federal government has recently tightened the requirements in regard to food adulterants and insect pesticide residues. Though many studies show the importance of soil fertility to animals, it is very hard to prove in man as his diet comes from many areas, geographically speaking. The effects of heat and refining on amino acids, vitamins and mineral content of food is well known. As yet, there is no general acceptance of the freshness factors in the scientific world, as they have never been identified chemically.

There are many organizations which, in one way or another, are trying to improve the nutrition of the American people. We, the American Academy of Applied Nutrition, have no quarrel with any

of them and wish them all success. However, we are a unique organization, in that we have a professional section composed of those scientifically trained to apply nutrition to the treatment of disease and to carry on research into nutrition as a cause of disease and its use in the treatment of disease. These men realize that nutrition for positive health is the answer to the health of the nation. The American Nutrition Society, the lay section, has a wide open field of furthering the education of the individual as to how he should eat. After all, health is the individual's responsibility. The physician or dentist should not have to teach the basic factors of nutrition any more than he should have to teach the patient how to read his directions. Our field is to work through the schools, government agencies and with scientific educational organizations, to promote better health.

Each of us tries to explain what we don't know with the knowledge we have, and to deny the reality or the truth of the things we can't explain. This approach is, perhaps, necessary in the step-by-step laboratory research solution of a problem. However, in the relationship of man to man, of man to his environment, and of man to his Maker, we must accept the idea that truth, as it is presently known, is inadequate to explain the unknown. We, as an organization, are seeking truth in the field of nutrition. But, since we are also trying to improve the health of people, we fall back on our original observation that there has been some change in the diet of the Western civilized nations that makes this diet inferior to primitive diets in supporting strong, vigorous, healthy bodies. Therefore, we will endeavor to get food of the higher quality, as fresh as possible, in the most optimum amounts for ourselves and those who will listen to us.

We must not fail to cooperate with any groups or individuals who are also seeking to improve the health of people by nutrition, wherever there is a basic field

of agreement. However, we must not lose our basic philosophy that it is our duty to teach the individual how to obtain optimum nutrition for himself, and not be content to just raise everybody's diet from poor to slightly better. With the crying need for a group like ours, with good organization and dedicated leaders, we should be of great service to this area and to the country as a whole.

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