In Memoriam
Curtis Webb Caine, Sr., M.D.

Dr. Caine cited Scripture and the U.S. Constitution from his deep knowledge. He authored a timeless 34-article series on the U.S. Constitution published in the Medical Sentinel, the precursor to the Journal of American Physicians and Surgeons (https://aapsonline.org/the-constitution-plain-and-simple/).

We “practice private medicine,” he frequently admonished us. We are not in the “private practice” of what might be government or third-party medicine. Patients are the only indispensible reason for the existence of medicine—not “healthcare,” a new term that encompasses the bureaucratic infrastructure, revenue streams, and government objectives.

“Curtis was a visionary,” writes AAPS past president Thomas Kendall, M.D. “What he saw regarding the devolution of medical freedom caused him to stand with vigor against the forces of darkness.” His prescience was shown in his 1966 Letter to Mississippi Physicians (http://www.jpands.org/vol17no2/caine.pdf), which correctly predicted the damage the imposition of Medicare would inflict on the practice of medicine and the primacy of the patient-physician relationship.

Presenting 122 considerations, he wrote: “You will now decide whether or not you are going to be a government employee and practice socialized medicine. It is perhaps the most important decision you have ever made. There is no middle or ‘neutral’ ground.”

Today, physicians are still facing the decision about declaring independence or signing contracts with employers, managed-care plans, or Medicare/Medicaid.

“Are you saying to yourself as King Agrippa said to Paul in Acts 26:28—‘Almost thou persuadest me,’ but, but….

“Do not let as yet unresolved conflicts and unanswered questions deter you. Take your stand now on PRINCIPLE. You can work out the details of implementation as the necessity arises.

“‘Choose you this day whom ye will serve’—Joshua 24:15.”