From the President

Hope

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Hope is a very small word with a very large impact. Hope is powerful. Without hope, all is futility. There have been some recent changes for the positive to fuel our hope for a better future for medicine and freedom. The recent change of the presidency and administration here in the United States is a reinvigoration of hope for positive changes. We are also seeing a shift in other countries around the world, with conservative populism on the rise. And most importantly, our hope in Almighty God fuels and sustains our hope, no matter the changes in the winds that blow politically.

The historical comeback of Donald Trump to another U.S. Presidency is remarkable. In his inaugural address, there was a return to common sense and a resolve to get the country on a better track. Trump is abolishing "Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion" (DEI) programs, ending government censorship of free speech by getting rid of "misinformation" and "disinformation" censors, declaring that there are only two genders, and limiting "transgender" surgeries—a turnaround from policies that the previous administration promoted and AAPS opposed. We must continue to be a voice of reason and for what is right under the current administration.

The morning following the inauguration, my first patient commented, "Doesn't it feel like somebody just breathed a breath of fresh air over the country?" Several of my patients that week expressed a renewed sense of hope and optimism. But the work is only beginning, and there is a lot of work to do! We as AAPS need to continue our important work as advocates for medical freedom, informed consent, common sense, and the practice of private medicine.

A changing of the guard at the U.S. Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) and affiliated agencies will have a great impact on the practice of medicine. For far too long the agencies have been captured by Big Pharma and Big Government. Also, corruption and deception within these agencies must end. They have not been fulfilling their motto, "enhancing the health and well-being of all Americans," nor doing what is best for our citizens, public health, and the practice of medicine. Public trust in these long-standing agencies has been eroded.

The recent book entitled *Dawn's Early Light: Taking Back Washington to Save America* (2024, Broadside Books) by Kevin Roberts, president of the Heritage Foundation, brings to mind that our mission can be "Taking Back HHS to Save Private Medicine and Medical Freedom." AAPS supports President Trump's nominee for this position, Robert F. Kennedy, Jr., who I believe will help to accomplish that mission. Hopefully, Dr. Jay Bhattacharya, one of our speakers at our 2024 annual AAPS meeting, will be confirmed as President Trump's nominee to lead the National Institutes of Health (NIH).

Currently, President Trump has frozen NIH grants, an action that we hope will help root out the Big Pharma corruption and get back to true research to benefit public health. There is renewed hope for the independent practice of medicine and medical freedom.

In the past couple of years, many have worked to avert the attempted takeover by the World Health Organization (WHO), which sought to usurp our sovereignty, define pandemics, and dictate allowable responses. Thankfully, those efforts helped to delay those takeovers. Now we can be thankful that President Trump has removed us from the WHO, and we can maintain sovereignty and independent physician judgment on how to respond and to treat our patients according to what is best for that patient, not what is mandated by the WHO. Maybe he will go a step further and remove the U.S. from the World Trade Organization (WTO) and the United Nations (UN). We can always hope.

The recent rise in populist conservatism is encouraging. People seem to be waking up and standing up against elitist top-down dictates. The election of Javier Milei as President of Argentina in 2023, the re-election of Viktor Orban in 2022 as the Prime Minister of Hungary (and now the longest serving in that country), and Giorgia Meloni's 2022 election to Prime Minister of Italy evidence a rising up of the people to take back their countries. These electoral results are evidence that the global elite is losing its power grip. But the Washington establishment of deep-state entrenched bureaucrats will not retire gracefully but will rather escalate their opposition. Thus, we must stand strong and continue to fight for positive changes.

The rise of the medical freedom movement in the U.S. as well as other countries has been another example of people standing up to the elitist bureaucrats and defending their individual sovereignty against top-down mandates. The mishandling of the COVID-19 crisis and the unconstitutional mandates have been a contributing factor in this movement. AAPS has been a trusted resource for many regarding these concerns. We must continue to be a guiding light and a solid foundation in this effort so that it is not co-opted by its enemies.

President Trump's address to the World Economic Forum was also encouraging and refreshing. Displaying true leadership on the world stage to set boundaries and expectations gives us hope for strengthening our national sovereignty. Upholding the Constitution, taking control of our borders, prosecuting criminals, and holding foreign entities accountable is a great start and fuels our hope for a brighter and stronger future for our country and our freedom.

Our ultimate hope is in God Almighty, and He is on our side when we stand for what is right, just, and truthful. The prophet Isaiah encourages us in the Holy Scriptures: "But those who hope in ADONAI (the Sovereign Lord) will renew their strength, they will soar aloft as with eagles' wings; when they are running they won't grow weary, when they are walking they won't get tired" (Yesha 'yahu 40:31/Isaiah 40:31, Complete Jewish Bible). We must never tire in our work as AAPS to be the watchman on the wall and to stand for truth.

To quote Oliver Wendell Holmes, "I find the great thing in this world is not so much where we stand, as in what direction we are moving. To reach the port of heaven, we must sail sometimes with the wind and sometimes against it, but we must sail and not drift, nor lie at anchor." The winds of change are shifting in a hopeful direction, and we must hoist our sails and catch the changing of the winds and make the most of the work before us. Let us not lose hope!

As President Trump said in his inaugural address, "The impossible is what we do best." This also applies to AAPS as we continue to take on difficult issues and persevere despite the odds. We have accomplished much, and we have much more yet to accomplish. Thank you to all our faithful AAPS members for their ongoing work and support. If you are not an AAPS member, please join us. There is much work to be done to save independent medicine for all of us and our patients. Godspeed.

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