



PHYSICIANS NEWS SERVICE, INC.

130 East 59th Street, New York 22, N. Y. · PLaza 9-6300

*Medical
Tribune*

June 16, 1961

Albert B. Sabin, M. D.
The Children's Hospital Research Foundation
Elland Avenue and Bethesda
Cincinnati 29, Ohio

Dear Dr. Sabin:

In replying to your letter of June 14, I am keenly aware of the importance of your questions about the functions of Medical Tribune's Editorial Advisory Board and of our responsibility for utilizing the demonstrated interest of Board members to help develop the best possible medical newspaper.

There has been a definite history of activity by individual Board members since Medical Tribune began publication a little over a year ago, which is reflected in our correspondence files and, more importantly, in specific contributions to both content and policy of Medical Tribune. Recognizing that an Advisory Board must have a creative influence, we invited the participation of yourself and your colleagues on the Board with the knowledge that you would have ideas to stimulate our development. This has indeed been the case.

At the same time, during the early stages of publication we were hesitant to pursue a formalistic relationship with the Advisory Board, preferring to maintain communication through reports and invitations to Board members to comment on editorial content and progress. This temporary policy was partly out of deference to the requests of some Board members to honor their limited time potentials, and partly out of our belief that a formal structure should await the emergence of Medical Tribune's developmental patterns.

After Medical Tribune began publication, we sent two report letters, both inviting comment and suggestions, to all Board members -- on October 19, 1960, and June 6, 1961. Your response of November 2, 1960, noting a need for more emphasis on the coverage of medical research, definitely steered us in that direction and the paper has reflected that advice. At that time we also heard from Dr. Rigler, who suggested that we give added attention to work at NIH and to reporting of foreign medical developments; from Dr. Braceland, who expressed agreement with plans to expand coverage of medico-legal interests; from Dr. Palmer, who thought the editorials were progressing; and from Dr. Master, who doubted that the activities of physicians' wives contained much of interest but agreed with the plans for expanded work in economic, political and scientific subjects. Dr. Schick replied with general agreement on news, features and editorials. Dr. Dameshek made some specific recommendations concerning the participation of Board members in writing editorials and acting as "In Consultation" authorities.

Dr. Sabin

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As a result of Dr. Dameshek's suggestion, we made plans to utilize the knowledge and contacts of Board members in scheduling panel discussions for the "Therapeutic Tribune" conferences. Dr. Palmer is participating in one on ulcerative colitis on June 20, having nominated other members of the discussion group and assisted in working out the framework of questions for the conference. Dr. Dameshek is giving similar assistance for a "Therapeutic Tribune" discussion planned for the Fall on hematology. As other "Therapeutic Tribune" panels are scheduled, it is our intention to ask Board members to participate in the planning of the panel discussions in their particular areas of work and interest.

To our most recent letter, that of June 6 (suggesting a means by which the Board could assist in our follow-up reporting of medical investigations) we have already had acknowledgements and agreement with the idea from Dr. Ochsner and Dr. Palmer, besides yourself.

As we have moved through this early period of Medical Tribune's history in our contacts with the Advisory Board, there has been consideration of the form the relationship should take in the near future. Your letter anticipated this discussion, but I can give you the central ideas of it now.

First, we intend to circularize frequent reports on editorial progress (and problems) to the Advisory Board with requests that members comment on our judgments and offer their own suggestions and criticisms. This applies especially to the Editorial Page, where we are definitely moving into a period in which Medical Tribune's own editorial positions will have to become much more sharply defined. We plan also to seek the Board's opinions concerning the values of specific features in the paper, in the light of readership response to them, and ways in which they might be improved.

Second, we plan to seek increased utilization of Board interest in such projects as "Therapeutic Tribune," "In Consultation" and the extension of Tribune's reporting of clinical and research developments. A pattern for this utilization has been approached through the discussions with Dr. Dameshek and Dr. Palmer. Other contributions will be suggested.

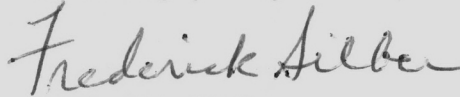
Third, we plan to invite the Advisory Board to meet with the publishers and editors of Medical Tribune in the early Fall, probably in New York, for a full day of discussion and exchange of ideas about the paper, its function and responsibilities, and the best ways of meeting its editorial obligations. Details about this proposed meeting will be forthcoming within the next few weeks.

Dr. Sabin

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I would like to make just one final comment. There appears to be agreement among the Advisory Board members, as expressed in their communications to us, that Medical Tribune is a valuable medical newspaper. It has demonstrated its independence and, we think, its integrity in a number of ways. While we have been reticent about pressing the Board toward greater and more formal activity, we are in fact eager to have such activity. After a year of effort, we on the staff are still at a high pitch of excitement regarding the present and future potentials of the newspaper. We are proud to be associated with the distinguished and stimulating scientists on the Board and are determined to derive the maximum benefit for Medical Tribune from their participation.

Sincerely yours,



Frederick Silber
Managing Editor

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cc: Members of the Editorial Advisory Board