

# The Medical Roundup

by *Walter Alvarez*

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## The Food and Drug Administration

Not enough of us in the United States know that in Washington there is a government bureau—the Food and Drug Administration—which is constantly working and striving to protect us from eating spoiled food or taking useless or harmful drugs.

I have just been reading an informative book, called "The Impact of the Food and Drug Administration on Our Society." It is filled with several dozen short chapters, dealing with the many ways in which this remarkable bureau and the able and devoted men and women in it protect us Americans from harm.

For instance, if I go into a lunch counter and eat a "hot dog" it is the Food and Drug Administration which has seen to it that I am not eating some horse meat. When a child is ill and one of us takes the physician's prescription to the druggist, it is the FDA that has seen to it that the drug is pure, properly labeled and standardized.

Years ago, when I was a small boy, and my physician-father bought digitalis with which to treat people with serious heart trouble, he had no way of knowing that the material in the bottle had the proper strength. He couldn't be sure even that the material was digitalis. Today, thanks to the FDA, when a druggist fills my prescription for digitalis, he knows that the material has been tested on an animal, and has the standardized strength.

Today, if I prescribe for a patient some serum or vaccine, it is the FDA that has seen to it that the ampule is sterile and the medicine is safe and active and properly made.

Often, in years past, when I have dropped into visit with the top administrators of the Act, I have found them filled with heartbreak over some of the difficulties they had encountered in trying to fight very powerful offenders through the law courts. These offenders had so much money, and the law had so many loopholes that it was hard to do much.

Just Try To Convince Jury  
As my friends, the devoted administrators, said, it is easy enough to satisfy a physician or an expert that a certain drug is of absolutely no value in the treatment of a certain disease, such as cancer. No one who knows anything about drugs would doubt this for a minute, but just try through weeks of testimony in court to convince a jury of laymen of this when 50 or 100 persons are brought in, perhaps by a cruel quack, to testify that they were cured by the drug of what they had assumed was cancer or had been told by the quack was cancer.

One of the loopholes in the law is that a manufacturer can say pretty much what he likes about a good-for-nothing drug so long as he does not make false statements on the labels of the bottles which he sends across state lines.

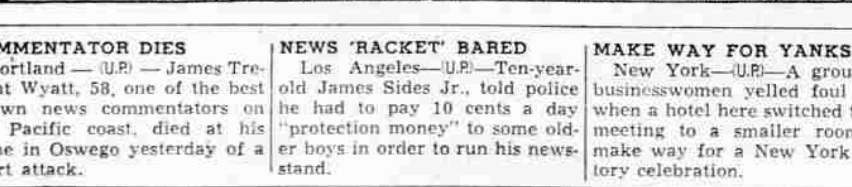
I remember one day hearing over the radio about "a marvelous new drug" that had been discovered that would cure arthritis and relieve the pain almost instantly. I turned to the friend who was with me and said, "What will you bet that that is aspirin?" Going across the street into a drug store, I picked up a bottle of the medicine off the counter and there, on the label in fine print, I read that the stuff was acetyl-salicylic acid— aspirin, just as I had said. Hence the person who bought the bottle of tablets with the fancy name was just paying for his aspirin about 50 times the current retail cost for that quantity of acetyl salicylic acid—a very cheap drug.

Hard To Get Quack  
Similarly, when a quack says that he has a sure cure for cancer and offers it to you for \$400, cash, it is hard for the FDA to stop him. They would love to do it, but they may have to wait to get after him until he sends a bottle of his medicine— mislabeled — across the state line. Then, if the quack has waxed rich off his suckers, it may take the FDA months to get a court decision against him. Then, if he is powerful enough to hire lawyers with political connections he can sometimes go ahead and thumb his nose at the FDA. The FDA can broadcast to the nation that his so-called medicine could not cure anything, but no one pays any attention to the top drug experts in the country. Aren't we Americans funny?

Dr. Alvarez hopes his readers will understand that it would be impossible for him to answer requests for information or to attempt to diagnose by mail.

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## They'll Do It Every Time By Jimmy Hatlo



COMMENTATOR DIES  
Portland — (U.P.) — James Tremont Wyatt, 58, one of the best known news commentators on the Pacific coast, died at his home in Oswego yesterday of a heart attack.

NEWS 'RACKET' BARED  
Los Angeles — (U.P.) — Ten-year-old James Sides Jr., told police he had to pay 10 cents a day "protection money" to some older boys in order to run his newsstand.

MAKE WAY FOR YANKS  
New York — (U.P.) — A group of businessmen yelled foul ball when a hotel here switched their meeting to a smaller room to make way for a New York victory celebration.

## Elvis Presley Draws Big Crowd, Summons

Dallas, Tex. — (U.P.) — A large crowd—including several elderly women, teen-age girls wearing lipstick and high-heeled shoes and a deputy sheriff with a summons — waited for Elvis Presley Thursday night.

The summons by the Amusement Enterprises of Fort Worth concerned a breach of contract suit. It was served by Dallas County Deputy Sheriff Bill Rike.

The rock 'n' roll idol sang and gyrated to the accompaniment of screams from many of 30,000 fans Thursday night in the Cotton Bowl.

appeared in a black and white Lincoln Continental. The deputy served the summons again but "The Pelvis" refused to talk about it.

The summons was served on a man in a green jacket who drove up in a car and tried to slip into the Cotton Bowl. He protested he wasn't Elvis Presley.

The denial was confirmed when the rock 'n' roll singer

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## Marine Corporal Faces Court Martial

Parris Island, S.C. — (U.P.) — A supply room corporal went before a court martial board at this Marine boot camp today on charges he slugged a recruit in the stomach for failing to call him "Sir."

Cpl. Richard J. Bille, 21, of Erie, Pa., appeared before a court martial board made up of four officers and two enlisted men charged with "maltreatment" of Pvt. Donald Hamisfar, 20, of Norwalk, Ohio.

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## Home and Foreign Missions To Be Featured During Week by Baptists

Home and foreign missions will be emphasized at services in the First Baptist church, North Central at Fifth, this week.

## Group Formed Of Scholarship Winners

Ashland — Eight winners of Bernard Daly Fund scholarships attended a dinner meeting at the home of Mr. and Mrs. James Dawson, 63 Pine st., Ashland, Wednesday, to form a permanent organization to promote social and service affairs, and to commemorate the name of the donor.

## Wives of Marines Refuse 'Move' Order

Atsugi, Japan — (U.P.) — Dozens of infuriated wives of U.S. Marines here said today they will refuse to obey a directive of the U.S. 1st Marine Air Wing ordering them to return to the United States.

be host to the Shasta-Cascade Women's fellowship in its annual fall rally. Women from the southern Oregon and northern California areas will gather for fellowship and business.

The sessions will begin with registration at 9:30 a.m., and last throughout the day. A banquet will be served at 6 p.m., to which the men are also invited, and a general evening service at 7:30 will follow.

Some 500 dependents of Marine air wing personnel were told by Wing Commander Brig. Gen. David F. O'Neill last week that they must be out of Japan within 30 days because of "Marine Corps policy." The wives had paid their own travel expenses to Japan to be near their husbands.

San Francisco's famous "Emperor Norton I" was born Joshua Abraham Norton in England in 1819.

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