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- Walter Cronkite,
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January 30, 1968

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NOVA

Few physicians use right to advertise for patients

By Marcena Fadal
Reporter

In 1982, the Supreme Court ruled that the American Medical Association must allow its members the right to advertise, but physicians still are reluctant to market their services, Dr. Stephen McDaniel, associate professor of marketing at Texas A&M, said.

McDaniel did a study to see to what extent physicians would advertise.

He randomly selected 75 newspapers from across the United States and checked them for physician advertisements.

"I looked through each one of the newspapers at two different times," McDaniel said.

"I looked through every page, every part of the paper to see if I could find any kind of physician advertising," he said.

Contrary to McDaniel's expectations, he found less than one advertisement per paper.

"There has been a lot of history of American Medical Association and medical doctors having an anti-advertising attitude," McDaniel said.

"One reason is that advertising has been viewed as being unprofessional," he said.

A common belief among physicians is that a good doctor should not have to advertise his services, he said.

"Another reason is that physicians believe if they advertise, they will have to raise their prices," McDaniel said.

"Studies have shown that not only does advertising create a better product, but it also reduces prices," he said.

But reduced prices may end up meaning reduced quality, McDaniel said.

"You do have a market of people who want the lowest health care can receive," he said.

"Maybe the quality isn't going to be as good," he explained. "It may be sort of a mass approach with a lot of waiting in line. You may be inconvenienced, but the price is low."

However, specialty advertising in the form of pens, pads of paper, balloons imprinted with the physician's name, is a common area of advertising doctors employ without reluctance, he said.

Advertising will not save a product that is not already good, McDaniel said.

He said the effects of advertising were summed up best by Bill Bernbach, who founded BBDO, a leading advertising agency.

"Advertising will only make a product fail faster," McDaniel quoted Bernbach as saying.

Bush dismisses hopefuls as 'creatures of Congress'

(AP) — Vice President George Bush said Monday that he was better qualified for the White House than rivals he dismissed as "creatures of Congress," and Democrat Bruce Babbitt criticized six-term Rep. Richard Gephardt as a "lifelong Washington insider" trying to run against the establishment.

In the paper chase, Bush and Sen. Bob Dole each picked up \$6.3 million during the last quarter of 1987 — more than many of the candidates collected all year.

Meanwhile, another contender for the Republican nomination, Pat Robertson, accused the Bush campaign of Watergate-style dirty tricks in the wake of the Michigan convention. The former television evangelist's supporters cried foul after Bush captured a lion's share of Michigan's delegates over the weekend.

"The things that are being said, the anti-Christian bashing that going on by the Bush forces, such things as calling evangelicals cockroaches, as calling evangelicals fascists and Nazis, putting out literature with Mr. Bush's picture on it saying 'keep these fundamentalists out of the party,'" Robertson told a news conference in Washington.

"There's been some really raw stuff going on and I thought we were past that after Watergate," he said.

Bush slammed members of Congress, his main target obviously Dole, during a speech in New Hampshire.

"Six of the 13 people running for president are creatures of Congress," Bush said.

"I've run an essential government agency. I made more decisions than the Central Intelligence Agency . . . in a week than 13 members of Congress in a year," Bush said. He said members of Congress lack leadership, quoting an old line, "It's hard to find a leader who has his ear to the ground."

Bush's count was off by one of the GOP candidates, Dole and New York Rep. Jack Kemp are current members of Congress and Pat Robertson is a former House member of the Democrats, Gephardt, Illinois Sen. Paul Simon, Tennessee Sen. Albert Gore Jr. are sitting senators and Gary Hart is a former senator.

Earlier in the day, the vice president appeared on NBC's "Today" show and was questioned about his role in the Iran-Contra affair.

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