

## THE AMERICAN PSYCHOANALYTIC ASSOCIATION

In additional to the presently legal threats to the confidentiality of the physician-patient, therapist-patient or analyst-patient relationship, reference was made by several speakers to a current instance of a grossly illegal invasion of personal privacy and the privacy of the therapeutic relationship. The theft of confidential records has apparently been sanctioned and covered up, if not actually ordered, by a person or persons very high in the government, presumably for the purpose of discrediting or intimidating an individual. It was the opinion of all speakers that an immediate Statement should be formulated, deploring such activity; that such a Statement should be transmitted to the President of the United States, National Legislators, Press and Television; and that the Subcommittee on Confidentiality of the Committee on Social Problems should then prepare a careful Statement on the whole issue of privacy, privilege, and confidentiality as it relates to the analyst-patient relationship. The Executive Council unanimously endorsed these views and approved the specific recommendations for action. The immediately appointed Ad Hoc Committee produced a Statement which was accepted unanimously in its final form as follows:

POSITION STATEMENT ON THE VIOLATION  
OF THE  
PATIENT-PHYSICIAN RELATIONSHIP

The American Psychoanalytic Association wishes to direct attention to its concern for the protection of a patient's right to confidentiality.

This reaffirmation of our views is prompted by reports in the public press indicating that this fundamental right to privacy has been violated. Our special interest relates to that aspect of the doctor-patient relationship occurring in a psychotherapeutic context.

We are unalterably opposed to the misappropriation of information intended for the physician only, and given specifically for therapeutic purposes. Any unauthorized intrusion into such a confidential relationship is totally unacceptable because of the extremely personal and sensitive nature of the communication.

Disclosure may threaten the therapy and well-being of the patient, in addition to violating the right to individual privacy basic to a free and democratic society.

In particular, we strongly protest the use of such information to discredit an individual or to influence the political process.

VII. Report of the Treasurer - Dr. Alex H. Kaplan

The Report of the Treasurer to Executive Council is presented in its entirety in Appendix C.

Note was taken of objection by several Societies to the \$5.00 per dues