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Dr. Cushing Resigns VA Post in Protest Of Medical Policies

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Dr. Edward Harvey Cushing, assistant chief medical director of the Veterans Administration, will leave his post this month as a result of "fundamental and irreconcilable" differences with Vice Admiral Joel T. Boone, U.S.N. (ret.), medical director of the VA.

Dr. Cushing's brief letter of resignation was released yesterday. Admiral Boone immediately announced the appointment of Dr. George Marshall Lyon, founder and director of the VA's radioisotope research program, to succeed him.

The apparent disagreement over top VA medical policies recalled the bitter resignation 11 months ago of Dr. Paul B. Magnuson as medical director.

Stated Reasons Earlier.

Dr. Cushing, an outstanding teaching doctor for many years,

told Admiral Boone in a recent conversation that he was resigning January 30. At that time, according to the letter of resignation, he also stated his reasons.

However, in the resignation letter, Dr. Cushing mentioned only "the conviction, which has grown during the last few months, that there are fundamental and irreconcilable differences in our approach to the problems of the Department of Medicine and Surgery."

Dr. Cushing accepted another four-year term only last September.

Active in Atom Work.

Dr. Lyon, 56, was closely associated with atomic research during World War II as director of the Navy's division of atomic medicine. He was a member of the team which exploded the first atomic bomb in New Mexico, and was present at the atomic bomb tests on Bikini atoll.

He has been senior research assistant to Dr. Cushing.

Dr. Cushing came to the VA during the tenure of Dr. Paul Hawley. Dr. Magnuson succeeded Dr. Hawley as medical director.

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Dr. Lyon Named as Successor

Dr. Cushing Resigns as Boone's Assistant, Protesting Direction of Medicine in VA

By N. S. Haseltine
Post Reporter

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Dr. Edward Harvey Cushing yesterday resigned as assistant chief medical director of Veterans Administration, protesting the direction of VA medicine.

His resignation, which he asked be made effective "not later than March 1," was accepted with "regret" by VA Medical Director Joel T. Boone, (Vice Admiral, USN ret.), who immediately named a successor.

Appointed to succeed Dr. Cushing is Dr. George Marshall Lyon, founder and director of VA's extensive radioisotope research program, and former director of the Navy's Division of Atomic Medicine. Senior research assistant to Dr. Cushing, he will take over the office on March 1.

Dr. Cushing's resignation marks

the first open evidence of discord among top officials in VA medicine since the firing of Dr. Paul B. Magnuson as VA Medical Director on January 15, 1951. At that time, Dr. Magnuson appealed to his supporters to continue their work for VA, rather than to resign as they were threatening.

Dr. Cushing, who headed the research and education service to VA's department of medicine and surgery, declined to discuss details of the reason for his resignation.

His letter stated that the decision was "based entirely on the conviction, which has grown during the past few months, that there are fundamental and irreconcilable differences in our approach to the problems of the Department of Medicine and Surgery."

Friends, however, said Dr. Cushing had privately expressed

frustrations over direction of his division, and the apparent slowing down of progress in VA's program of using VA hospitals as teaching hospitals for interns and residents. Like Dr. Magnuson, they said, he feared that VA medicine was slowly being returned to the "bureaucrats."

Admiral Boone, expressed "surprise" at Dr. Cushing's resignation despite the latter's oral notice to quit in a conversation between the two on January 30, said he'd prefer not to comment until "Dr. Cushing more clearly defines his reasons."

Until last week, Admiral Boone said, he had no "intimation" that Dr. Cushing was dissatisfied, "especially since he agreed last September to serve another four-year term in his important position."

"Until last week, everybody seemed to be happy," declared Admiral Boone.