A grave danger threatens San Antonio—far graver than many of us thought; otherwise we would have been at the polls on April 7 and this runoff would not have been necessary.

After a long and bitter struggle, San Antonio emerged from the dark ages of politics in 1949. With that victory won, we grew careless. We elected a good city council and a capable group of leaders were chosen. And then we sat back and relaxed. But the hungry politicians didn't relax. They began to snipe at the government of San Antonio here and to undermine it yonder. And now good government is in danger again.

It has been said that the protection of the public's health is a purchasable item. Your new Council-Manager government recognized the fact and took immediate steps to protect this community.

In 1951 the Public Health Department operated on a budget of $415,205. This budget, the last under the old Commission Form of Government, included 34 Public Health Nurses and 8 full-time and part-time public health physicians.

On August 1, the Public Health Department received a 70% increase in the first official budget granted by the new Council-Manager form of government. This increase, in dollars and cents, meant $709,522 to purchase health for this community. A large amount of this increase was granted in supplemental funds to provide services to the newly annexed areas which became a part of the city last September.

The record shows that this increased budget resulted in great improvements in public health services to your community, the City of San Antonio. These additional funds permitted the Public Health Department to add 17 nurses, 2 dentists, 6 doctors, 4 laboratory technicians, and 22 additional employees for the sanitation section. These additions are reflected statistically for the entire year of 1952. Seventeen more Public Health Nurses meant 5,418 more home
visits and 4,185 more indigent children were prevented from having diphtheria, whooping cough, smallpox, or tetanus through immunizations.

Sixty-seven fewer babies died from infant diarrhea in 1952 than in 1951. It is also noted that San Antonio's high death rate from tuberculosis was reduced in 1952 as evidenced by the fact that in spite of the City's growth, 61 fewer persons died of tuberculosis. As a matter of fact, our over-all death rate last year was the lowest in San Antonio's history.

Our venereal disease rate was considerably less in 1952, thanks to increased funds, which enabled venereal disease control officers to reduce the cases of infectious syphilis, for instance, from 83 to 33, a reduction of 50 over the previous year.

Even the addition of 2 part-time dentists showed results in 1952. The dental activities of the Public Health Department show an increase of 11,390 school child inspections over 1951. Two thousand-six hundred eighty-one (2,881) school children were inspected by Public Health Dentists in 1951, and 14,071 were inspected in 1952. Several thousand children were sent to private dentists and many indigent children were seen at the Health Department Dental Clinic.

But improvements in community sanitation services were also allowed by the 70% increase in the first Council-Manager budget granted the Public Health Department. These additional funds enabled the Public Health Department to help clean up the town. This increase is reflected, for example, in the inspections of food establishments where more than 250,000 people eat daily. The Food Sanitation Section made 7,000 more corrections in 1952 to protect your health.

Mosquito and fly control crews were able to inspect and correct 3,627 more potential breeding areas in 1952.

In 1951, San Antonio had 205 cases of rabies in animals but in 1952 the Public Health Department reported only 87 cases of animal rabies and only 15 to date this year. This was a reduction of 118 rabid dogs in 1952. It is noteworthy that the Rabies Control Division of the Public Health Department picked up almost three thousand more stray animals in 1952 than in 1951. These stray animals are the potential spreaders of rabies which, as you know, is an incurable disease.
Yes, your first City Council, under San Antonio's first Council-Manager government, realized and recognized the importance of protecting the health of this community.

Communicable diseases recognize no street or sectional boundaries. The health of the entire community must be considered. Your City Council, we feel, has proved that Public Health is purchasable. And we propose to continue purchasing the best for San Antonio. But, we might add, the votes of the citizens of San Antonio are not purchasable.

We have had an excellent health department in San Antonio for 10 years. It has had many trials. Dr. Dudley A. Reekie was forced out as Director of Public Health in 1947, and now Dr. Austin E. Hill is leaving. We must protect the gains we have made in public health and those gains are seriously threatened.

The time is short. The work is hard. But the reward is great. If all lovers of good government will put aside all apathy, all carelessness, and all selfishness, San Antonio will once again be rescued from designing politicians. Let us each one get out and work. Let us put aside all minor considerations and press forward to victory on April 21. Let us not return to the dark ages of politics in San Antonio. We must not let this happen. Vote the Citizens Ticket next Tuesday and save San Antonio.