

Dr. CHAPMAN. In my opinion, that is exactly right. I do not know whether we have made this clear or not. We have tried. This may be the basic principle involved here. What we are talking about is not a commercial product here, a salable item in the sense that some piece of merchandise is salable. You would not give me anything for these glasses because for you they are absolutely valueless, nor would I give you anything for yours because I could not see out of them. There is so much more to the understanding of human vision and the care of it than just the quick prescription of a pair of eyeglasses that might make you see a little better.

Mr. HORTON. That may be perfectly true, and I would admit that, except we are going to have an optometrist in charge of this department, one of your own, a man who has this ability.

Dr. CHAPMAN. But he does not have the opportunity to utilize that ability. Why would he want to utilize it when his patient load is coming in because of advertising, price, and so forth? He has no reason to serve the patient well when he builds the practice on that basis. He has more patients generally than he can see. He has to see them quickly and rapid to see the next one and the next one and on and on and on. This is a purely commercial operation owned by people who couldn't care less about human vision, who have no concern whatsoever for the welfare of the individual patient in his office. They are not set up on that basis. They were not designed that way.

If you put this kind of product in the market place with five minutes' service, trade in your old eyeglasses and all of the many gimmicks that go into getting people into this place, there is no atmosphere or climate whatsoever for this optometrist, whoever he may be, to practice in the full, thorough way that he should to take care of the vision of the individual patient.

You are dealing with the most precious possession we have, and you cannot deal with it in the market place. That is the purpose of this bill, among others, as it is in my own State and many others where this is not allowed.

Mr. GUDE. I have one more question. The requirements that you have outlined for the profession of optometry are lower than would be required for a physician.

Dr. CHAPMAN. I do not think we have ever made an analysis of their level. There are differences. I do not think they are any lower, but they are different.

Mr. GUDE. The thrust of your argument is that the eye is probably one of the most sensitive organs in the body, and it requires the very best attention that a person is able to get, and for this reason the optometrist should be a professional man.

Dr. CHAPMAN. There is no question about that. The only question—and it is not a question because you are absolutely right. Yet, we think so much more in terms of the vision care of the patient than we do of eye care as such, because that is not the field of the optometrist. I want to make that point, because so often they will say, "Are you an eye doctor as such?" Of course, we are deeply concerned with the eye, but more particularly our training is in the area of the vision problem after ascertaining the health of the eye.

Mr. GUDE. It seems to me the thrust of your argument is that optometry should be just a branch of the field of medicine—for example,