

He is administrative assistant of the International Union of Electrical Workers.

Sitting to my right and your left is John Golia, Business Representative for Local 408, and also a member of the Advisory Board for Vocational and Extension Education of the New York City Board of Education and of the Advisory Committee on Ophthalmic Dispensing of the New York City Community College.

Now, our analysis of H.R. 1283, confirmed by what we heard here yesterday, is that it is a bill inspired by the American Optometric Association heavily weighted in favor of what we call salon entrepreneur optometrists and against all others, including the public, ophthalmologists, opticians, employed optometrists, corporations and other employers of optometrists and opticians, and the unions which represent such employees, their pension and welfare funds and employers who contribute to such funds.

The main thrust of the bill is to outlaw the employment of licensed optometrist by firms and corporations and thereby to corner the eyeglass market for the optometrist.

In other words, this bill could be well called the "Great Eyeglass Swindle of 1967" on the part of the AOA, of course, and despite all the comments yesterday about behavior of employed licensed optometrists and the length of time it takes them to perform an examination, we know that the salon optometrists will be giving even quicker examinations if they pick up all the volume dropped by the corporate employers.

We believe that the AOA, which should be concerned with clear vision, is taking a very myopic view of the needs of the public for low cost eye care.

An optometrist is a hybrid which grew up in our national life, combining professional and merchandising characteristics with the accent heavily on the merchandising side. He makes his living selling eyeglasses. If we were to suggest to salon optometrists they could be accorded real professional status provided they abandoned the sale of eyeglasses, they would immediately withdraw their sponsorship and support of H.R. 1283 and run for cover. Their *raison d'être* is precisely the sale of eyeglasses, euphemistically referred to as "dispensing" in the optical field. All the high sounding phrases in Dr. Chapman's statement yesterday to the contrary notwithstanding, 75 per cent of all the monies earned by optometrists in this country is earned from the sale of eyeglasses.

Optometrists studiously avoided involvement in the Hart Bill hearings before the United States Senate—S. 260. In fact, the American Optometric Journal itself warned its members of what it termed "inherent dangers" in this bill. The Hart Bill, as you may know, would prohibit practitioners as defined therein from the sale of drugs or eyeglasses. H.R. 1283 and all its sister bills are the reverse of the Hart Bill. H.R. 1283 would professionalize the optometrist while then at the same time authorizing him to sell eyeglasses. We agree with the ethical premise of the Hart Bill.

If there is a problem with regard to the quality of an eye examination, it should not be difficult to fairly set minimum criteria for such examination, whether given by a salon optometrist or an employed optometrist. In fact, I think this is a point that was made by the Washington Publishers Association at the hearings last year and to that we say "Amen."