

should apply to its practice in the District of Columbia and we hope the United Optical Workers Union will join us in support of the bills you are considering to accomplish these purposes.

Members of the Optometric Society ask that you bring our licensing law up to date. We ask you to recognize the developments and advances made in vision care since enactment of the existing 1924 licensing law. Some members of our Society will have to modify their mode of practice when this bill is enacted. We have formed a committee to help the handful of optometrists who are currently employed in commercial establishments to set up practice elsewhere in the District where their professional services are badly needed.

We in optometry have policed our own insofar as the present law permits. Governmental intercession is now needed for the regulation of the practice of optometry if the residents of the District are to receive the necessary protection from the unscrupulous to which they are entitled. The Optometric Society of the District of Columbia urges you to pass this legislation.

[From the Washington Daily News, Aug. 10, 1967]

A CASE OF EYE TROUBLE

I am deeply grateful to The Washington Daily News, Clare Crawford, the police and the Board of Optometry for your efforts in getting a court ruling making it illegal for opticians to fit contact lenses. Even if the ruling is set aside, this publicity may alert the public to the danger.

I would like to set forth my experience. Because of a poorly fitted lens, I am without appreciable sight in my right eye and am in almost constant pain from ensuing surgery and effects of the injury.

I did not shop for an optician. I was sent by a prominent ophthalmologist to a firm that employed the doctor's wife's niece as a technician. This woman made the Keratometer reading. Documented facts show that her training consisted of wearing lenses and working under or with a man who was in charge of the office. This man was himself untrained.

Unfortunately, one cannot always be sure that one is safe when under the aegis of the medical profession. I won my court case against the fitters of the contact lenses and can understand the jury bringing in a "Not Guilty" verdict against the doctor. They, understandably, were overwhelmed by his contemporaries filing in en masse to put the stamp of approval on his conduct, admitting that until a short time before testifying they had not seen or heard of me. There are other unsavory factors in this case which are shocking.

I sent all pertinent information concerning the case to the AMA and asked that they check a complaint which I then filed separately with their office. I also sent personal correspondence to and from doctors showing disclosure of privileged information. I found that patients have lost, if they ever had it, the right to dissent.

VICTIM.

[From the Washington Daily News, July 26, 1967]

Reporter's test case

OPTICIANS CAN'T FIT CONTACTS, COURT RULES

The D.C. Court of Appeals yesterday effectively barred opticians in the District from fitting contact lenses, a practice some local opticians even advertise.

Ruling in a case brought to court by Washington Daily News reporter Clare Crawford, the appeals court said opticians may grind or fabricate a contact lens, but must leave the sensitive fitting operation up to licensed optometrists or ophthalmologists.

In January of 1966, Mrs. Crawford was fitted for a pair of contact lenses by Norman Fields, 42, of Embassy Opticians, 1361 Connecticut-av nw. He was later arrested by police and charged with violating the District's optometry code.

Mr. Fields was convicted by Judge Harold Greene in May, 1966, but he appealed. Yesterday the three-judge appeals court upheld his conviction.

The Appeals Court found that when Mr. Fields fitted Mrs. Crawford he performed operations far exceeding the mechanical filling of a prescription from a licensed eye doctor.

The court said that "placing a foreign object on the cornea "could have consequences far more serious than simply prescribing or adaptive eye glasses worn