

Mr. MAGEE. I do not know. This was drawn up by the Medical Society itself, Mr. Sisk, in an effort to bring about proper results. The medical physicians felt that when the tests reached this stage, medical need is needed medically. Therefore, the optometrists should be required to refer and gave him a criteria. Colorado has gone this far. They have not put the criteria in their act. In Colorado the state legislature recently changed their law to provide that if an optometrist failed to refer, whether he saw any medical problem in the eye, that was ground for revocation of their license to practice optometry.

Mr. SISK. That is considerably different from what I understood to be the case. We have available here in the committee every state law in the land. I have no record of such action as you suggest. I am curious to know if this has been proposed in the medical profession for some time.

Mr. MAGEE. No, sir; it was proposed for the first time last year, before your committee. This is new.

Dr. ALBERT. I think Michigan now has—

Mr. SISK. I would like again, Dr. Albert, to ask you some questions with reference to the definition of optometry over in Section 3.

Take for example the State of Florida. Have you had substantial problems in the State of Florida with existing law insofar as the profession of optometry is concerned? Has the medical profession found reason to find fault with that law?

Dr. ALBERT. I am not aware of it one way or the other.

Mr. SISK. I will quote from that law, because I notice a great deal of emphasis being placed on this definition. This definition states that the practice of optometry, a profession, for the purpose of this chapter is defined as follows: "to be the diagnoses of the human eye and its appendages, the employment of any objective or subjective means or methods for the purpose of determining the refractive powers of the human eye, or any visual, muscular, neurological anomalies of the human eye."

Also in New Jersey, again, I am just glancing at some of the state laws, optometry is defined as the employment of objective and subjective means, et cetera.

Gentlemen, going back to one or two comments I made this morning, I said then and I mean it now: We are concerned with the care of the public, the right of the public to have confidence in their doctors or whomever they go to for attention concerning human ills, whether eyes, ears, throat or heart.

What percentage of the American people today are cared for by optometrists as opposed to those first contacting ophthalmologists or medical doctors? Do you have that figure?

Dr. ALBERT. The Department of Commerce issued that figure a few years ago. I think it was something like 65 percent.

Mr. MAGEE. We can get the exact figure for you.

Mr. SISK. We have a figure as high as 75 percent.

Dr. ALBERT. I think that has been changed in recent years.

Mr. SISK. The point I am trying to make, Dr. Albert, is that I might have had difficulty getting an appointment with an ophthalmologist. I happen to see both an ophthalmologist and an optometrist, as I have a glandular problem.