

a child or adult and properly know the condition of that person's eyes and fit glasses at a cost of \$7 or even \$12.45? I am not opposed to low prices to the extent we can get them there.

Mr. Stein, we are concerned with patient care and the doctors' responsibility to the patient for the purpose of care of his eyes.

I am not concerned about dollars and cents. This is really the guts, pardon my use of the word, the difference between your position and mine.

Mr. STEIN. May I respond to that?

Mr. SISK. Yes, sir.

Mr. STEIN. Let me tell you this. I had a conversation with one of the employed optometrists for Sterling in the upper New York State area. This man had been engaged in the private practice of optometry working for himself and a privately practicing optometrist. He had graduated with honors from his school of optometry. He was the leading student in the class. I asked him why he entered that profession. He said, "I worked for private practicing optometrists and this man's income depended upon pushing the sales of eyeglasses. He got big prices for them." He said, "Now I work for Sterling and it does not make a bit of difference to me whether I sell a pair of glasses or I don't." He said, "I had the opportunity recently of being able to provide a woman and her five children and she was a poor woman and with not very much funds or assets, but I was able to provide her and her children with eye examinations and eyeglasses, all six of them, for the cost that woman paid the year before for herself."

He was proud of the fact that he was rendering this kind of service to the public. I might also point out that the principal executive officer of Sterling Optical Company is a licensed optometrist in the State of New York who graduated from the Columbia School of Optometry. He, too, is very zealous about his desire to serve the public. He feels most desirous, as the entire Sterling organization does, to provide the public the best eye care possible at the most economical prices.

If we learned, if we were informed or if we were advised that any of our employed optometrists were not rendering service to the very best of their ability, we would join with any enforcement agency to see that that optometrist was appropriately disciplined.

I can assure you that it is our desire and our pride to render the best service to the public and to be able to do it at a price that they can afford.

Mr. SISK. I am sure, Mr. Stein, that dedicated men, because of finances, would find themselves working for some corporation. I am sure that in the medical profession and the profession of optometry or anywhere else you get a bad apple. They know these things are all true. I still come back to the fact that if your youngster in school was having eye problems, whether or not you would be satisfied to send that child to an establishment where glasses were being merchandised for \$7 a pair after supposedly an examination. Maybe you would not.

Mr. STEIN. Let me say this. I have turned the corner of forty recently when most people develop transmyopia. I got those eyeglasses at Sterling. I bought them upon examination by a Sterling-employed optometrist. I feel that I have been perfectly well cared for.