

First of all, I would like to say that a question was raised as to just how far the optometric group have attempted to go in usurping this work. This was discussed at length, but I would like to read here from a paper presented here a paper presented at the Conference on Public Health and Optometric care held in St. Louis, Missouri, January, 1967, by the American Optometric Association.

In the December, 1966, issue of the Journal of the American Optometric Association, Dr. Henry Peters, discusses vision problems in schools. He lists vision problems as follows: disease, acuity, squint, refractive error, coordination, visual performance, developmental problems, and perceptual problems.

The article goes on to say:

Uniquely, optometry is the only group that functions in all of the areas that Dr. Peters refers to in his article.

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I believe here there was a statement that very definitely indicates the feeling of the American Optometric Association that it is their responsibility and function when they discuss disease as a visual problem. There is very little question that they are attempting to usurp the practices of medicine in the practice of optometry, and I would like to present this quote as a matter of record.

As the president of the National Association of Optometrists and Opticians, I have had the opportunity to observe since 1957 the tremendous amount of legislation relating to the optical industry. Over 140 bills were introduced throughout the United States on this very subject. Many of these bills are optometric in nature and many of them is similar to the bill being considered here, H.R. 1283, and they would restrict in some manner the operation of the optometric practice outside of the members of the AOA. There were bills in Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, New York, and these bills were not passed because the members of those legislatures investigated these bills and found that the ultimate purpose was to create a monopolistic situation for certain optometrists and exclude the right of other optometrists and opticians to conduct their business.

One bill did pass, and I would like to read from this bill, because I believe it indicates the ultimate objective of the American Optometric Association to control or to monopolize the business of dispensing eyeglasses. This was Senate Bill No. 137, introduced January 20, 1967, in the Montana Legislature which subsequently passed and was enacted. It reads as follows:

Re it enacted by the legislative assembly of the State of Montana:

Section 1. Section 66-1302, R.C.N. 1947, is amended to read as follows:

"Section 66-1302. Provisions regulating practice of optometry. It shall be unlawful for any person:

'1. To practice optometry in the state of Montana unless he shall first obtain a certificate of registration, in the manner hereinafter provided, and filed the same or a certified copy thereof with the county clerk and recorder of the county of his residence, excepting such persons who at the present time are regularly registered optometrists and possess a valid, unrevoked certificate of registration;

'9. To replace or duplicate ophthalmic lenses with or without prescription or to dispense ophthalmic lenses from prescription, without having at the time of so doing a valid, unrevoked certificate of registration as an optometrist; provided,