

Since receiving your letter, I have done some checking with the leaders of various private agencies who would be vitally interested—i.e., J. M. Ulmer, secretary, National Foundation for Eye Research—a paper organization but with political influence; Dr. John Ferree, National Society; Dr. Arthur Keeney, Secretary, National Commission for Research in Ophthalmology and Blindness, director of Wills Eye Hospital, Philadelphia, and a new member of our SAC. I also tried to get hold of David Weeks, executive director, Research To Prevent Blindness, but he was out of town until next week.

Dr. Keeney gave me the most important factual information. He personally is very much in favor of it. He advised that at a meeting in Chicago January 30, of one of the professional associations, attended by most of the leading ophthalmologists in the country, the news release of January 27, and Congressman ROONEY's bill was discussed fully and they were nearly 100 percent in favor of it.

I think this is very good because the ophthalmologists have been riding on the coattails of the National Committee for Research in Neurological Disorders, who have been very active through Col. Luke Quinn, Washington lobbyist, in getting appropriation increases for the National Institute for Neurological Diseases and Blindness (NINDB). Keeney said the ophthalmologists realize that if they don't get behind this bill and get off the seat of their pants, that the optometrists are going to take the play away from them, through the influence of the brother of Representative JOHN FOGARTY, who through some connection in Bethesda, is strong for the optometrists.

The ophthalmologists feel they have enough "get up and go" to do their own lobbying through their influential patients and contacts and they will be able gradually to obtain appropriation to fund the program that is now working out to some degree through the NINDB.

I also understand that Research for Prevention of Blindness—through a Gallup poll conducted last November—found that the loss of sight is the second illness feared by the public. This is mentioned in ROONEY's "fact sheet." Jules Stein, chairman, M.C.A., as well as chairman of Research for Prevention of Blindness, is sponsoring this through ROONEY, who was a patient of one of Mr. Stein's very close, friendly ophthalmologists. This is all background for your information.

Dr. John Ferree of the society told me this was going to be discussed Thursday afternoon by their executive committee and he could not give an official opinion until after the meeting but he personally was very much in favor of the bill. J. M. Ulmer, of Cleveland, has the same opinion.

I have not discussed this with Mildred yet but I personally think it would be a wonderful thing for the expansion of eye research. I am glad to know that you are planning to cosponsor the bill. I would like to point out one thing that I don't think is included. If and when the bill passes, and I surely hope it will, it will probably take 3 to 5 years before appropriations are established, building complex secured or built; that is.

Haven't time to finish this today. In the meantime, I have talked to Fred Rooney and his executive secretary, Leonard Randolph. Will try and complete my report the first of the week. Keep well. Best wishes.

Sincerely yours,

S. ADELSHEIM.

FIGHT FOR SIGHT,
New York, N.Y., February 25, 1966.

Hon. HERBERT TENZER,
House of Representatives,
Washington, D.C.

DEAR HERBERT: Only now I am able to respond to your letter of February 10, asking for my opinion with regard to a National Eye Institute.

Although I have a very definite opinion, based on my almost 20 years of service as executive director of the Fight for Sight, I wanted the views of leaders in the field of ophthalmology, many of whom serve on our scientific advisory committee and others with whom I am in contact.

I should like you to know that all are extremely enthusiastic and feel that the establishment of a National Eye Institute is past due and mandatory in order that the necessary progress be made in the fight against blinding eye diseases which, as you know, are on the increase.

This consensus from particularly qualified and conversant men in the field of sight, underlines my own conviction that a separate Institute concerned with visual impairments and blinding eye diseases is vital. I wish to go on record in urging the establishment of a National Eye Institute, and hope I may have the opportunity to testify on its behalf during the hearings.