

(The statements referred to follow:)

STATEMENT OF SPURGEON B. EURE, O.D., PRESIDENT, SOUTHERN COLLEGE OF OPTOMETRY, MEMPHIS, TENN., AND CHAIRMAN, ADVISORY RESEARCH COUNCIL, AMERICAN OPTOMETRIC FOUNDATION

I am Spurgeon B. Eure, President of Southern College of Optometry located in Memphis, Tennessee, and, more pertinent to this committee, Chairman of the Advisory Research Council of the American Optometric Foundation, to which post I was appointed in the fall of 1966 by Dr. Emmons L. Eichhorn, President of the AOF. I am the holder of a Bachelor of Science degree from the University of Southern Mississippi in Hattiesburg, Mississippi, Master of Arts degree from Memphis State University in Memphis, Tennessee, and a Doctor of Optometry degree from Southern College of Optometry.

The Advisory Research Council consists of sixteen prominent men in the field of visual science. They are charged with the responsibility of screening and recommending as to acceptance or rejection of all American Optometric Foundation Grants and Fellowships.

Attached to my statement is a list of the visual scientists who are Council members, and who have authored over five hundred manuals and articles. Quoting the titles of each publication would be most time consuming, however, a mention of a few which are most pertinent seems in order: "Optometry and Blindness", "What Price Research", "The Effect of Toxic Involvements on Vision", "Examining the Partially Blind Patient", "Prin. and Exam. Techniques for the Care of the Partially Seeing Child", "Social and Vocational Rehabilitation of the Blind and Partially Sighted Older Patient", "Subnormal Vision Aids."

These gentlemen have organized and disseminated additional information to the eye professions through the publication of fourteen books.

I am before this committee today with a report on the activities of the American Optometric Foundation, to give a review of the objectives, efforts and results the Foundation has effected in its short history. I feel this end can best be conducted with a chronological history of the AOF and its accomplishments in vision care research, and training of future vision scientists. The importance of education pertaining more specifically to optometric education will likewise be brought out.

On July 11, 1947, just 20 years ago, an announcement was made public from the Golden Jubilee Congress of the American Optometric Association meeting in Atlantic City that the American Optometric Foundation had been founded under the patronage of the American Optometric Association and by authority of New York Supreme Court Justice Samuel Dickstein. Dr. William C. Ezell, then past president of the AOA, buttressed the infant organization by consenting to be the first president of the Foundation. With the help of other leading optometrists, he structured the Foundation with a design which would move optometry into the ranks of other professions that were willing to underwrite their own research organization. Said Dr. Ezell, "The AOF will seek and administer funds for the broadening, upholding, improving and aiding in all respects optometric education, the profession of optometry, and its practitioners. The organization will also foster research projects in optometry." All of this philosophy was incorporated in the objectives of the AOF with the credo of Research, Education, Literature, and Professional Advancement. The AOF is basically an altruistic, non-profit corporation that depends mainly on its 2,739 members for its sustenance.

From its meager beginning 20 years ago to its present position in health circles, the AOF has continually made its presence felt. Limited initial funds forced the Foundation to concentrate in the early days on just two of its announced four objectives: training teachers and visual research. So far, Foundation funds have aided fifteen optometrists in obtaining the Ph. D. degree. Currently, funds are being provided for eight additional doctoral candidates (two are expected to receive the Ph. D. degree this year).

In the research department, 20 special grants have been provided for far ranging visual research projects. These grants have resulted in the publication of manuals and texts; translations of foreign texts; publication of the first optometric reference dictionary; television film series designed to increase the public understanding of vision; development of a tonometer modification; and a camera which is capable of recording eye movements. At the present, two research grants are in progress at Indiana University's Division of Optometry