

NATIONAL COMMITTEE *against* MENTAL ILLNESS

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May 15, 1972

Mrs. Albert D. Lasker
c/o Ritz Hotel
15 Place Vendome
Paris, France

Dear Mary:

Just a few quick notes to bring you up to date, since I am on the run:

(1) On House Appropriations, the Flood Subcommittee will mark up on Wednesday, May 17th. Congressman Rogers has a press conference set for tomorrow morning with some other members of Congress so we can get to make one final push for a much larger health appropriation. We have put together into a Congressional Reprint the statements of the 18 members who backed up Rogers on the floor last Wednesday (Wilbur Mills, Tip O'Neill, Carl Albert, etc.) We will get some of them out at the Rogers' conference on Tuesday, May 16th.

(2) Naturally, I will try to get the figure from the Subcommittee mark-up as soon as possible. It is not so easy, but I think Representative Conte will be the leak. I want the information so that the Coalition at its meeting this Friday can plan on what floor action we will take. We have a few days for this -- I checked the matter out again today, and it looks like the full Committee will not mark up until the week of Tuesday, May 30th (Monday is Memorial Day).

The bill is tentatively scheduled to come to the floor on Thursday, June 8th.

(3) The usual mess is going on in the Senate. I told you that about six weeks ago Dirks and I had dinner and at his request I agreed to come up and go over the lists of requests for outside witnesses on the Senate side, pick out the important ones and ask the rest to file statements. I have called him several times since on the matter, and he said he was still working on it.

Last Friday, as we were holding our Coalition meeting to plan the Rogers' press conference for tomorrow and other matters, we received word that Magnuson would hear the outside witnesses starting

on Tuesday, May 23rd, and continuing through the 24th, 25th, 26th -- then the Memorial Day break, and then two more days the following week, May 30th and May 31st. (at last notice, 180 witnesses - crazy!!)

Somewhat annoyed at this sudden notice and the abrogation of the agreement with Dirks, I called him when I got back from the Coalition meeting Friday. He said that he had just been too busy and that the notices were going out for outside witnesses to appear in the order in which the letters had been received (in other words, if some little unknown health association had written a letter to appear, a letter would go out giving them a 10-minute scheduling). Dirks said he had been too busy to handle it and that the secretary in the office, Mrs. Butland, was sending out the invitations on the basis of the date on which the requests had first come in. This is what they have been doing for three years, and it drives you up the wall.

To illustrate, because Mike DeBakey has a ferocious schedule during that witness period, I had the devil of a time getting him on on the one day on which he is available at 10:00 in the morning, Thursday, May 25th, and also Mr. Dirks was very annoyed that Doctor DeBakey was going to bring along a dramatic four-minute picture and a projector, He finally reluctantly consented. I am now trying to do the same for Ed Klein.

(4) I suppose we just have to live with this kind of wildness forever. I have tried for four years to package the NIH witnesses into one group, and I am still back where I was in 1969 when you and I first talked to Senator Magnuson.

(5) Because the Senate Subcommittee mark-up is now scheduled for Tuesday, June 6th, we are somewhat in a bind. First of all, when we testify before Magnuson we will obviously not have a House figure, since Representative Mahon will not do the full Committee mark-up until Tuesday, May 30th, and Mr. Moyer feels that it is more probable to be Thursday, June 1st. That will be after the Magnuson hearings. In the past, as you know, we have generally had several weeks after the House Appropriations Committee full report is officially released to revise our testimony and point out the inadequacies of the House figure.

(6) If we are going to get any really big increases, we will have to do the usual business with Maggie's subcommittee. I note from the schedule that you will return to New York Monday evening, May 29th. This leaves only a few days before the Subcommittee mark-up, and you know with Magnuson, the Subcommittee mark-up is the whole ballgame; that will be the figure. If you want any increases, you will have to come down and go along with me and see the people several days before the June 6th mark-up. I know that you have this

Cancer Chemotherapy Conference June 1 - June 3, but you have to judge whether another conference on cancer chemotherapy (they just held one in Gatlinburg, Tennessee) is more important than getting additional monies for cancer, heart, etc. The only other possible date is Monday, June 5th. However, Monday is not a good day for a lot of Senators, but it is the day before the mark-up, and if it has to be that way, so be it. But I want to emphasize that June 5th is the absolutely last day that anything can be done. At 10:00 a.m. June 6th they will mark up. I think that prior to the mark-up we could do some business with Magnuson, Bible, Bob Byrd, Montoya, Hollings, etc.

(7) The Rogers' Heart legislation has not been reported out of the Subcommittee, because he couldn't get a quorum for a Tuesday, May 9th meeting. He will try again this week. I will push him hard on including stroke language and money.

(8) Ted Kennedy and Phil Hart held two very successful days of hearings last week on the rotten job being done by the commercial insurance carriers. This is the most effective way of killing Russell Long's catastrophic bill. I send you copies of some of the excellent press coverage we received. We also made NBC and CBS.

(9) I have been too busy with Appropriations, heart legislation, hearings before Kennedy this Wednesday, May 17th on a three-year renewal of Community Mental Health Centers to check the Humphrey people further on what he has been doing in the matter of speaking about health. I called the two people we spoke to, once each, and received no reply. Max Fine has had the same experience. However, by a lovely coincidence, a gal I know, who works on a George McGovern Subcommittee, called me last Thursday and asked me for a health insurance speech and a medical research speech which he could use in California. She is a very intelligent lawyer, and she says that McGovern is hot on the health issue. Max Fine and I alerted our Coalition group in California for financing health insurance, which is the largest we have in the country. It is financed by the Teamsters and is run by a very bright guy named Tom Moore. This gal immediately got in touch with Moore and he said that he would arrange anything McGovern wanted to do in the health area.

I have to get this out for McGovern, since Max Fine is still pretty much under the weather. Unfortunately, on his doctor's advice he is going to the Virgin Islands for a couple of weeks for some physiotherapy so that he can avoid surgery.

I am tired of the Congress.

Cordially,


Mike Gorman

P.S. I enclose a copy of a story in the Washington Post of May 12th, in which your candidate mentions health once -- "the Goliath of disease". I don't think you got your money's worth.

P. P. S. Just talked to Bob Maher in Rogers' office, and he says Rogers will make a second, and probably successful try to get the Heart legislation out of Subcommittee Tuesday, May 16th. (tomorrow)

M. G.

Enclosures