

AGAINST NATIONAL COMMITTEE MENTAL ILLNESS, INC.

1028 CONNECTICUT AVENUE, N.W. • SUITE 1215 • WASHINGTON 6, D. C. • REPUBLIC 7-4398

Executive Director MIKE GORMAN

September 15, 1960

Dear Mrs. Lasker:

I am very happy to report to you that, during the last week in August, the Congress voted \$100,900,000 for the National Institute of Mental Health for the coming year. The increase of approximately \$33 million over the Administration budget is by far the largest ever received by the Institute. Furthermore, it is much greater than the increases voted to any of the other components of the National Institutes of Health.

The major areas in which sizeable increases were voted include:

RESEARCH:

The Congress voted approximately \$13 million more than the Administration requested in this area. A major part of the increase--approximately \$5 million--is the National Institute of Mental Health's contribution to a \$12 million Mental Health-Neurology research building. This is a most welcome appropriation, since the Institute has been severely cramped for office and laboratory space for a number of years.

The psychopharmacology program of the Institute received a big boost. In addition to a sizeable increase in its regular programs, the Psychopharmacology Service Center received a million dollars for the development of specialized "drug evaluation screening centers" in various parts of the country. We testified to the need for such centers which could concentrate on rapid, high quality drug evaluation, and we are confident that this initial appropriation will lead to larger appropriations in future years.

The Title V Program of the Institute, which devotes itself to the support of demonstration projects in new ways of handling mental illness, was increased by \$1,400,000. Half of this increase will be devoted to demonstration projects in juvenile delinquency, a field in which we have

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(List Incomplete)

Purpose: Through a broad educational campaign, to create public understanding and support of the 10-point Bill of Rights for the mentally ill adopted by the 1954 National Governors' Conference on Mental Health. To convince the American people to actively support federal, state and local preventive mental health programs emphasizing research, training and expanded clinic and community services designed to treat and cure mental illness in its early stages.

concentrated a great deal of our legislative efforts during the past year, and an additional \$300,000 is allocated to juvenile delinquency in both the general research and training programs of the Institute.

Following a specific recommendation in our testimony, the Congress directed that "\$1 million be allocated to research on aging, with particular emphasis upon physiological research designed to restore many of these aged people to independent living." The Congress expressed concern with the increasing number of aged mental patients in our mental hospitals, noting that 30% of the patients in these hospitals today are over 65 years of age.

TRAINING:

The Congress voted an increase of approximately \$17 million in the field of training. However, this increase is more apparent than real, since \$11 million will be allocated to the paying out of various training grants a year in advance to accommodate the schedules of the various training institutions.

We are very grateful for the \$1,500,000 increase in the general practitioner training program. This will allow the Institute to reduce the backlog in both general practitioner applications for residency training and institutional applications for pilot project training programs in this field.

The research training program of the Institute, largely devoted to the support of school programs designed to increase the number of research workers in psychiatry, received a boost of \$1,700,000.

CLINICS:

The Institute's grant-in-aid program to the states for clinics and other community mental health services was increased by a million dollars. This second successive million dollar increase, which raises the program to the present level of \$6 million, will help many of the low income states in developing these vitally-needed community services.

We have also been quite successful with the medical research program of the Veterans Administration. The Administration cut this program back to a level of \$15,400,000 this year, but we restored the cut and raised the over-all figure to \$21,500,000. We are happy to note that the Veterans Administration has acquired a new Director of Psychiatric Research, and he will start his duties with a greatly increased appropriation.

We suffered one major defeat in our inability to pass a bill which would provide \$25 million over a five-year period for the support of training and demonstration projects in the field of juvenile delinquency. Putting it very frankly, our defeat

was largely due to the weak response of most state and local mental health associations on this issue. I am confident that we can rectify this in the upcoming session of Congress.

In conclusion, although we have brought the National Institute of Mental Health budget up over the \$100 million mark for the first time, we have many challenges ahead of us. As a matter of fact, the present budget merely allows us to wipe out accumulated research and training backlogs. Our mental hospitals are still pitifully understaffed, our clinics have long waiting lists, and we still search for research breakthroughs against the major forms of mental illness.

Please give me your guidance and your help. Please write and tell me what programs we should concentrate upon in the coming years. More important, please tell me what all of us can do so that we can alleviate the suffering of the several millions of Americans presently undergoing treatment for mental illness.

Cordially,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Mike Gorman". The signature is written in a cursive, slightly slanted style.

Mike Gorman

MG:bhf