

February 6, 1956

Dear Senator Hill:

Some of my colleagues on the Hoover Commission have asked me to write you of our earnest hopes that the bill you and Senator Kennedy are expected to bring in regarding the Armed Forces Medical Library will be successful.

Having drafted the report of the Hoover Commission on this point, and having attended both Mr. Reidy's conference and one meeting of a group of friends of the Library that the librarian Lt. Col. Rogers has attracted to serve the Library's interests, I have naturally felt hesitant at further explanations, requests, expositions, etc.

So for brevity's sake I just want to review the reasons why I attach to this issue a grave importance for the future of the medical field.

The first: Profitable study of what has been already learned in any field of medical research calls for the appropriate medical literature, adequately available. No defense for the amounts being spent on medical research by all the government agencies can be made if we continue to neglect the need for one adequate library, such as the Library could be made, to store and make available.

The second: The Armed Forces Medical Library needs the status, the recognition, and the support of a National Medical Library. Civilian support in appropriate measure is needed, but this has not been and will not be elicited or maintained by a badly housed and inadequately supported component of the armed services budget. A significant National Library needs a status of its own if neglect and starvation are to be ended: such an action was clearly indicated thirty years ago.

The third: The present building and its overcrowded state offend and discourage every doctor I've known to have visited it in the past quarter century. It is simply a disgrace.

The fourth: I think the Health Museum belongs in the city of Washington and the Library belongs at Bethesda. Though closely

related, the functions of Museum and Library are not the same: they don't serve the same users or the same purpose. But if putting them together administratively will mean added strength to your proposal, I see no valid reason why not.

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I'd like to add that Lt. Col. Rogers' competence, devotion, and attitude in the last two years' uncertainty seem to me to have been exemplary.

And I'd promise you the warmest enthusiasm of all doctors in medical research and teaching for what you could do for the future of world medicine in this matter.

With kindest regards,

Yours sincerely,

Alan Gregg, M.D.

The Honorable Lister Hill  
United States Senate  
Washington, D. C.

AG:bh

P.S. I am leaving this letter in manuscript just before my departure for California, and asking my secretary to type and sign it for me.