

December 17, 1957

Mr. Charles Winick
Research Director
Joint Legislative Committee
on Narcotic Study
State of New York
Room 918 - 18 West 45th Street
New York 36, New York

Dear Mr. Winick:

It is untrue that the Lexington hospital was established as a Demonstration Center to guide the States in their own hospital plans. The two hospitals, Lexington and Fort Worth were established to help addicts throughout the United States who wanted to be cured and have no place to go, and to treat Federal prisoner addicts. It was recognized that the Federal narcotic prisoners were in the main prisoners only because of the narcotic regulative laws and that they fundamentally were emotionally sick people who would be harmed rather than benefitted by prison life.

There is a provision, as you know, for treating probationer patients. These are addict violators who would be put on probation with the requirement that they go to one of these hospitals and accept treatment. This provision has been practically nullified by fanatical laws, that prevent judges from putting addicts on probation and by incessant propaganda that has distorted the thinking of many judges about addiction.

Unfortunately I do not have a copy of the Congressional hearings on the hospital bill. It is possible that in these hearings some one mentioned demonstrations for the States in order to boast the arguments for the hospitals, and if my memory serves me correctly, the bill as passed authorizes the giving of information to the States, but this was a gesture not a specific purpose.

The hospitals would, of course, give information to the States and in my time, as well as later, would have admitted State physicians to the hospitals for purpose of study, but in my three years at Lexington (the first three years of the Hospital) and my six years supervising both hospitals from Washington, no State asked for or was offered anything.

Mr. Charles Winick--12/17/57

Of course, there has been a great deal of information about narcotics dissiminated from Lexington, mainly through the Addiction Research Laboratory that was established almost immediately after the Hospital opened. It was largely on the basis of the authority given to dissiminate information that I started this laboratory on its work.

I am pleased that you are assisting the New York Joint Legislative Committee and that the approach of this Committee, as I see it, is so different from that of the U. S. Senate Subcommittee, which was apparently blinded by the guidance it got from an enforcement agency.

I congratulate you on your fine article in Law and Contemporary Problems, Duke University, Winter, 1957. I suppose you have seen the report on addiction by the American Medical Association now being published in the AMA Journal.

Sincerely yours,

Lawrence Kolb