

HAMILTON

file

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December 28, 1937

Dr. Lawrence Kolb, Medical Director
 U. S. Public Health Service Hospital
 Lexington, Kentucky

Dear Dr. Kolb:

Naturally, I am very much interested in your letter of the 23rd.

The Governor and the Commissioner of Welfare would have been very much pleased if Dr. Ackerly would have undertaken the state job. They proposed that he do it on a part-time basis, with some young man to help him for the state and some other young man to help him with his teaching. He wondered if duty called him, but concluded -- I think wisely -- that such conditions of work would be impossible. Moreover, he will be in position to support anyone who does undertake the administrative job.

Under conditions created by the state constitution, it is probable that Kentucky can make more progress under a borrowed commissioner than under someone who could be appointed permanently. Men of experience in secure positions elsewhere may not be eager to undertake something that has only two years of certitude. Of course, it is hoped that Lieutenant-Governor Johnson will succeed his chief, since he is believed to have a friendly attitude towards the progress of mental institutions. If you should consent to undertake this work, it would be a tremendously fine thing for Kentucky, and I think that perhaps you would get some enjoyment out of it. Dr. Ackerly said he would be much pleased.

The Commissioner of Health and the president of the university insist that their jobs do not end with the Governor's term, and the issue has apparently never been pressed in court. The Commissioner of Health is a very astute man; furthermore, it was

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Dr. Lawrence Kolb

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arranged that his successor would be picked from a list submitted by the State Medical Society, and spoilsmen in the Governor's chair might not get much comfort from such an arrangement. The president of the state university declares that his appointment is for good behavior. It is of course highly desirable and, in my opinion, essential to any continued progress in the institutions that some device be found by which men and women can make the care and treatment of the mentally sick a career in Kentucky, as it is in Michigan or Massachusetts. In any state, occasional casualties will occur, but in most states the medical positions, at least, are career jobs.

We are having sent to you the laws of Massachusetts and New York, and also the new state hospital law of Michigan. When Dr. Zubin gets back, we will send you some figures on pay and allowances for medical positions.

Let us know whenever we can be of any help.

Yours very cordially,

Samuel W. Hamilton

Director

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