

Remarks of Hon. John E. Fogarty, M.C., 2nd District of Rhode Island at on receiving award to honorary membership in the Omicron Kappa Upsilon, the honorary scholastic society of Georgetown Dental School, May 23, 1957 at Officers Club, Bethesda Naval Hospital.

Ladies and Gentlemen and Guests:

I can not tell you how deeply I appreciate the honorary membership you have bestowed on me. While an honor, like this is, to be honest, personally gratifying, it is even more satisfying as recognition of some of the things I have worked for over the years.

Among these is the advancement of dentistry. The leaders of your profession have consistently pointed out to me the tremendous economic burden of dental defects, and the generally underestimated threat that dental defects create for the general health of individuals.

I have been impressed with the forthright approach of the dental profession to the question of fluoridation. The way in which the profession has endorsed and battled for the extension of fluoridation of public water supplies will stand to its everlasting credit. It is really remarkable how tiny but loud minorities can play upon superstition, emotion and out and out misstatements to deny to millions of children the scientifically proven benefits of fluoridation.

This is a prime example of the way in which research and politics often meet. If you will reflect briefly, it will be evident that scientific findings are not always accepted by the public simply because they have been scientifically proven. As a matter of fact, I have been told by scientific friends that scientific proof has not always been accepted by scientists themselves. I have had a theory for some time that research people are actually pretty much like other people—more learned and so forth, but still human. Someone pointed out to me, to my surprise, that Dr. Conant, the former President of Harvard and Ambassador to Germany had the same view, and he pointed out a quotation to prove it. I found the passages so amusing

that I would like to repeat them for you. Talking of the old days of science Dr. Conant wrote that, "As long as science was largely a field for amateurs, as it was well into the 19th century, a man could regard his discoveries like so many fish. If he defended their size against all detractors, and in so doing their length increased, well, his opponent was a well-known liar, too." And of science today, Dr. Conant has noted, "Once the scientist closes the laboratory door behind him, he can indulge his fancy all he pleases and perhaps with all the less restraint because he is now free from the imposed discipline of his calling. One would not be surprised, therefore, if as regards matters beyond their professional competence laboratory workers were a little less impartial and self-restrained than other men, though my own observations lead me to conclude that as human beings scientific investigators are statistically distributed over the whole spectrum of human folly and wisdom much as other men."

I was quite proud of the President^{of} Harvard for having the ^{INSIGHT} weight to agree with me on this question.

Seriously, though, I believe that the scientist has a vital role to play in the public life of the United States. One of the most impressive things to which I have been exposed in 17 years of service in the House of Representatives is the effectiveness of a relatively small group of scientists in translating for laymen like me the significance of medical and dental research to the health of our Nation.

There is a continuing great danger that scientists and the world of science will be too far removed from the ordinary man. When this occurs, the ordinary citizen is likely to fear science out of ignorance. On the other hand, the scientist is likely to withdraw into his laboratory because of fear of interference with his work.

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There must be a common meeting ground where science can be related to the needs of man in a way that will not reduce the effectiveness of science. This meeting ground must also be a place where the layman can learn not necessarily the substance of science, but how the scientist thinks and how he proceeds.

I have talked of scientists and research for two reasons. First, I believe that research in dentistry is ~~flourishing~~ flourishing as never before in our history. More funds are available and more people are interested.

Over the past few years, it has been my privilege to assist in the development of research in dentistry through extension of Federal appropriations for research grants and fellowships. For the past five years, these funds have been somewhat less than two million dollars per year. Last year, however, representatives of the dental profession made a most persuasive case for extension of dental research. They pointed out that the Federal funds made available earlier had extended the research base of dentistry, and increased the number of competent investigators. Equally important, they pointed out that dental research had reached the stage where much more work relating disorders of the teeth and mouth to the total functioning of the human body was necessary. In the light of these considerations the total annual budget of the National Institute of Dental research was raised to \$6 million. I am told that these funds, together with a sound research approach, have expanded the volume and the quality of research in dentistry.

My second reason for stressing research is that I believe the key to productive research is the exceptional individual. It is from dental students in the upper brackets of their classes—joined with those from other fields—that the dental research of the future will come. I hope that every dental student of high capacity

will seriously consider a career in research, or that, as a minimum, he keeps in the course of his clinical work the attitude of alert curiosity that underlies research.

In this connection, I returned yesterday from a trip to Europe in connection with the affairs of the World Health Organization. On the trip, I had the opportunity to visit a number of laboratories and some university departments. I was struck particularly by two things—the intense devotion of the graduate students and younger faculty to science, and their very poor material rewards. It struck me that things are to a degree reversed in this country. We spend a great deal of money on research and the salaries of scientists are very high as compared with those of Europeans. But I sometimes doubt whether the spirit of dedication to research and the respect for learning is as great in this country as in Europe.

Groups such as those represented by your honor society have a challenge to perpetuate and extend the spirit of respect for excellence that must underlie both clinical work of high caliber, inspired teaching and productive research.