

October 5, 1944

Dr. O. R. Yoder, Superintendent
Ypsilanti State Hospital
Ypsilanti, Michigan

Dear Dr. Yoder:

Eight hundred men are members of MCC operated CPS units serving in mental hospitals and training schools throughout the country. Returning to their home communities after the war will be hundreds of young men whom we hope will be better informed and more concerned citizens in regard to the problem of institutional care of the mentally ill. Among these men are those who are seriously considering a career in this field of psychiatry and institutional service. However, some of these men have doubts as to whether they wish to identify themselves with a state institution. In every unit there has been discussion pro and con as to whether the church should establish small hospitals for the care of the mentally ill.

This whole subject is a live topic in discussion groups in our hospital units. Our men will welcome any material which can serve to focus or guide their discussions. We are planning, therefore, a symposium on this subject: "Should the church establish and maintain hospitals for the mentally ill?" We would appreciate from you an article of 200 to 400 words discussing your views on this question. I am asking six others to contribute their views. It will be a representative group of individuals of professional, church and CPS background. We hope that there will be diversity of viewpoint among the various contributions. These letters we shall assemble as a symposium, mimeograph, and distribute to the units.

We are especially eager for a letter from you on this subject. Ralph Beechy indicated he had a good discussion with you on the proposal. You are in a position to view these plans objectively. You know the limitations of the small institution. You know the relative merits of the small church hospital and the larger state hospital.

Such a symposium should nurture and direct a good discussion. There are many angles to the problem. Is this really a concern of the church? Would the care in a church institution be superior

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to that in a state institution? Should the church establish general hospitals in preference to mental hospitals? What type of mental hospital could the church best maintain?

We wish to have this symposium ready for distribution by October 25. We, of course, will send you copies of the symposium.

Sincerely,

Robert Kreider
Hospital Section

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