

Cook County Board of
Commissioners
[Signature]

8/14/64

Mr. Seymour Simon, President
Cook County Board of Commissioners
118 North Clark Street
Chicago, Illinois

Dear Mr. Simon:

This note will serve as a memorandum on the matter discussed with you by phone today.

I first wanted to point out my identification with and in support of the overall program and philosophy of the Democratic Party since the early days of FDR, and my belief in the urgent necessity that this program and philosophy should prevail in these times of great national crisis. My recent attendance at the convention of the National Medical Association in Washington, where I sat in on an informal conference between President Johnson and twenty-five leading Negro physicians, further convinces me of the importance of preserving the present national program and philosophy.

I am therefore deeply concerned about this preservation in our county and state. Among other things that I am involved in to help in this area, I have thought about a long-standing murmuring criticism and a point of vulnerability which the opposition may soon take advantage of — namely, the complete absence of any Negro doctor, now or in the past, in any position of policy making or administrative authority at any level at the Cook County Hospital.

Perhaps I need not be too immodest to state that I have given 17½ years of voluntary service at Cook County Hospital as attending gastroscopist and furnished the \$1500 delicate gastroscopes through the years until one year ago. I wrote 25th place among 110 applicants in the competitive examination for internist at CCH in 1947. I was formerly assistant professor of medicine at the University of Illinois, and have continuously taught gastroscopy and gastroenterology in the Cook County Graduate School for 16 years to students from many parts of the world.

I should like to suggest that the position of "Chairman of the Gastrointestinal Endoscopy Service" could easily be set up to include supervision of gastroscopy, diagnostic esophagoscopy,

and proctosigmoidoscopy. I would supervise and continue to participate in teaching in this area and perhaps, in addition, I could serve on the residents committee or executive committee -- spending two mornings a week on a budget of \$6,000 per year. This, I believe, would be an important step forward in community relations -- and it would be greatly appreciated by the suggested candidate.

Very truly yours,

Leonidas H. Berry, M.D.

LHB/ld

Handwritten notes in bottom left corner:
D. Berry
1962