

COS 417/14.47

To Dr. Knopf from Dr. Flick.

Philadelphia,
December 23, 1903.

My dear Dr. Knopf:

Your letter of 22nd inst. to hand. I do not believe anything would be accomplished by a petition being sent to the United States Government in opposition to the Bell Congress nor do I think it wise to get up a rival Congress. It is bad enough to have our country discredited by the action of mountebanks but it would be still worse in my judgment to enter into an unseemly fight with such people. It might be that something could be accomplished by having individuals write to the President setting forth the facts or having someone who has the ear of the President call on him and present the facts to him. Such a step at least would not lead to notoriety and would not precipitate a public scandal. We must look at these things as the world looks at them and not as we see them. Whilst we recognize the true inwardness of the Bell Congress, the world does not and to get up an opposition will merely bring discredit upon the profession. It is my belief that less harm will be done by letting things take their way and the Congress prove a fiasco, thus clearing the atmosphere for a real scientific Congress in 1906 than to fight these people now and disgrace ourselves and our country in a way that will do injury to our cause for ten years to come. Let us go on and do good work as we have been doing and in a few years we will be able to make the world appreciate what we are doing in spite of the disgraceful work which is now being done by men who are looking for notoriety only.

With best wishes and the compliments of the season, I remain

Yours truly,

Lawrence F. Flick.