

## Letter from Robert Spencer to Alexander Graham Bell, February 12, 1891

Milwaukee, Feb.12, 1891. Prof.Alexander Graham Bell, Washington, D.C. My Dear Sir,—

I have read with deep interest your remarks before the congressional committee on Appropriations relative to an item of \$5000.00 to provide for the training of teachers of the deaf in the National College under Dr.Galaudete. On this subject I feel it my duty to speak in behalf of the Wisconsin Phonological Institute which has for the past few years been actively engaged as a philanthropic organization in promoting the education of the deaf by the oral method in the State of Wisconsin as will appear by pamphlets on the subject which I mail you herewith. I deem it of the highest importance that the views presented by you to the Congressional Committee on appropriations should be carried out. I am very confident that the progressive friends of deaf-mute education in this portion of the country will heartily sustain you in the position you have taken on this question of vital interest in the education of the deaf in th e is country. In saying this, however, I must disclaim any intention to detract in the slightest from the eminent services of Dr. Galaudete and his distinguished father.

I recently had the privilege of paying a brief visit to the National College for the deaf in the D. of C.and I found there in the advanced classes a considerable number of semi-mutes who had acquired speech or had not entirely lost it before entering that Institution. So far as I was able to learn the cultivation of speech with these students is neglected. I believe that the additional \$5000.00 asked for by the College if applied to the employment of the competent oral teachers and elocutionists in the College would result in the incalculable benefits to all classes of pupils in that Institution. I may say further that I was gratified to find a preparatory or elementary class in the College being taught by the oral method by a

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lady teacher who show evidences of ability and progress in speaking and reading the lips which is quite creditable.

Yours very truly, Robert Spencer President Wisconsin Phonological Institute