

If there is anything in this country that every member of Parliament in this House should be standing up and defending to the *n*th degree it is our medicare system. We meet people in hospital who would lose if they did not have the medicare system supporting them in this Canada of ours where we have a feeling for our fellow human beings. They would lose their homes, farms and businesses. There is no question about that. We know what the costs are today for operations and medical attention.

Our medical science in this country has done wonders over the years. One of the greatest speeches I will always remember was delivered by a member of this House. It was the hon. member for Crowfoot when he returned to this House last November after being away for five months receiving a heart transplant. I have sent his speech out to many people. I have given his speech to many doctors and nurses and hospital staff. It is an inspiration to them because how often do we say thank you to those people?

We have right here in the nation's capital one of the best heart institutes that we will find anywhere in the world. Who was the master-mind behind it? Yes, there were engineers. There were administration people solidly in support of it. There was a great community of interest throughout the Ottawa Valley and in the nation's capital for it. However the one who spearheaded it was Dr. Wilbert Keon.

I can well remember him coming up in the early 1980s to see me in my office in the West Block and he said: "Len, we must improve on our heart operation facilities in Ottawa for eastern Ontario, western Quebec and indeed for wherever people come from in looking for our assistance. We are putting patients out in the hall. We do not have the space and facilities for them".

I did go to work for him and worked very closely on a lobby to raise funds from the federal government to help improve on facilities at the heart institute. Little did I know that a few years later I would be one of the recipients of that excellent project.

I want to say this about Dr. Keon. He was born in a very small community in Pontiac County at Sheenboro, Quebec. Here was a man who went on to greatness and became a surgeon of real renown. As I have said before, he could have gone off to California. He could have gone to Texas or Boston and he could have written his own financial ticket but he did not. He chose to stay home

and do his work here in Canada on behalf of Canadians and we thank him for that.

There have been many more like him. He has set the example for many doctors at that institute, technicians, nurses and administrators who are really top-notch people. I want to pay tribute to them on the floor of this House tonight.

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The National Defence Medical Centre provides a lot of services for our diplomatic corps around the world and for our Canadian Armed Forces who come home to that hospital wherever they are. They have their own hospital and they do not take up beds for civilians at other hospitals in the city of Ottawa or other areas indeed in the country.

Dr. Leach is the head of cardiology at the National Defence Medical Centre. Dr. Leach's grandfather, Harry Leach, still lives in his own home in the village of Chalk River in my riding and he is 96 years old while his father is General Leach who is retired. Dr. Leach is leading up a fantastic number of doctors, nurses and staff at the National Defence Medical Centre who are a pride not only to our Canadian forces but indeed to this Canada of ours. I want to pay tribute to them tonight as a tremendously dedicated group at the National Defence Medical Centre.

While I was in that hospital for a number of days I met an 85-year old lady who had had a triple bypass heart operation at the age of 72. She was back for her second operation at the age of 85. With her bypasses she was out walking up and down the corridor. Medical science in this country has gone ahead by leaps and bounds over recent years.

There is another quality that these people have besides medical knowledge and expertise and that is their attitude toward the people whom they are trying to help. They have the most genuine and kind approach to people that one could possibly have. For many people that means encouragement and a great deal of support.

For those people who want to cut back on medicare in this country it is very easy for someone to stand out on a street corner and say that we have to cut back on these expenses because of our national debt and our deficit and so on. I wonder how their minds would change if they had to go into hospital and face the trauma of cancer operations and treatments and were told by their doctor that their situation was serious. I wonder if their attitude would change the day they walked out of that hospital after a final examination to be told that their