

Supply—Health and Welfare

facilities in the community. I am proud to say that the people in the Pine Falls community have accepted this integration and perhaps this is a good portent for success in the future.

I want to congratulate the minister on her stand against smoking. As a member of the dental profession who has to clean people's teeth I want to wish her every success in this campaign against smoking. I might mention that at the recent convention of the Canadian dental association the minister's stand against smoking was endorsed and, as I say, we wish her every success in this undertaking.

My main purpose in speaking tonight, and I make no apology for it, is to bring to the attention of the house and the government some factors relating to dentistry as they apply to the federal government and the people of Canada. I make no apology for this because I did not hear anything in the minister's introductory remark about this subject, nor have I heard any of the various speakers mention the subject in discussing these estimates. I think the importance of dentistry to the community at large might be better appreciated if people realized that approximately 33 per cent of the amount of money spent on health services in Canada is spent on dental services. The latest figures which I have are for the year 1962 and they indicate that Canadians spent for these services some \$395.2 million, and for dental services \$132.4 million. This is a very significant sum of money. I mention it, Mr. Chairman, only because I want to relate this sum of money which, as I say, amounts to something like 33 per cent of the amount spent for health care services by the Canadian people to the amount of money allocated by the department to dental health programs and dental research.

I should like to say that only about 1 or 2 per cent of the amount of money allocated by the federal government under national health grants allocated to dental research. It seems to me that this is a negligible amount. In fact, in the last three years this amount has been decreasing. The percentage of money allocated for dental research as related to the expenditures on all health research in 1961-62 amounted to 1.79 per cent; in 1962-63, 1.42 per cent; 1963-64, 1.14 per cent. In the last three years, therefore, it can be seen there has been a steady decline in the relative amount of money that has been allocated by the federal government to dental research. The amount in dollars and cents was, in 1961-62, \$67,911;

1962-63, \$50,312; 1963-64, \$48,009. We might compare this with the amount that was allocated in 1959-60 which was \$164,264.

I note that the Canadian Dental Association has made representations to the minister in this matter, and I hope that before we leave the first item the minister will give us some indication of the action her department has taken toward alleviating the scarcity of funds for dental research. As I say, the Canadian dental association has made representations and I am sure the minister will realize it is urgent that this amount of money be increased. I should like to refer to the brief presented to the royal commission on health services by the Canadian dental association. In the introductory portion of the brief the association asserts, with regard to dental disease, that the unnecessary tragedy of dental diseases is one of Canada's greatest health problems. Dental diseases are largely preventive, yet they are virtually universal. Almost everyone needs dental care yet in any given year only one third of the population visits a dentist. At another point the brief states that, by their very nature, dental diseases defy defeat without widespread application of preventive medicine.

This brings me now to the fact that we need to spend a great deal more money on research in developing further preventive measures because we are dealing with a disease which is largely preventable. I am reminded of my second pet subject, that is fluoridation. Fluoridation, as a public health measure, is probably the least expensive that is practised in this country. I think it costs around 12 cents per year per person to fluoridate the water in any fair sized community. This is indeed a very small amount of money when we consider the amount of money I have already mentioned as being spent on dental health services in the country. This is one dental health preventive measure which I think should commend itself to the government. It is a field in which I feel the government should take leadership. As I said, dental diseases are largely preventable. Statistics have shown that among the children of dentists, dental caries are some 40 per cent to 50 per cent less than in the population as a whole. This I believe is attributable to better health knowledge and education. I feel that before the government rushes into medicare or rushes into the socialization of dentistry and medicine, they should assume responsibility in the fields where responsibility lies on their shoulders, that is in the field of dental education and medical education as well as the prevention field.