

Medical Care Act

South Africa is concerned, its 1975 year book which appeared last week on my desk has statistics all the way to June, 1974.

Mr. Rodriguez: We do not read it.

Mr. Lambert (Edmonton West): That is right; the obstinately blind refuse to read. All I say is that in this area I think we are not as well served by Statistics Canada as we should be, because in this debate when considering the number of active physicians in Canada we should have figures more recent than 1973. As a matter of fact it is even better than that; it is not only Stats Canada. My source of information is actually the health manpower planning section of the Department of National Health and Welfare in its publication of February, 1975. That is how far out of date the minister's own section is.

When we talk about the number of physicians in Canada this includes all active civilian positions including interns, residents, and physicians employed by federal and provincial governments as well as pharmaceutical companies. It also includes those working as full-time teachers or researchers. There are very few, if any, who might not be counted in this definition, so I presume it might include physicians in the uniform of the armed services.

In 1973 Newfoundland had 605 physicians, Prince Edward Island 105, Nova Scotia 1,353, New Brunswick 677, Quebec 10,150, Ontario 13,726, Manitoba 1,597, Saskatchewan 1,186, Alberta 2,526, British Columbia 4,120, Yukon 18, Northwest Territories 29, and unspecified as to their provincial affiliation 3, making a total of 36,095.

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In 1975, according to the Canadian Medical Association, there were 1,572 graduates from Canadian medical schools.

Then we looked at how much it costs to produce a graduate medical student. I tried to get the statistics from various universities and from the CMA as to what it costs per student per year of study, and there was such uncertainty and such variation in figures that nobody wanted to venture a hard figure, so I left it alone. However, CMA has indicated a very rough estimate, but it should be knowledgeable about this.

It was estimated that the total cost of medical school for a doctor in Canada is in the neighbourhood of \$150,000 per student; in other words it costs about \$150,000 to produce a graduate doctor here in Canada. Of that amount the medical student will pay approximately 10 per cent in fees because I think the medical studies, as do others, are paid for approximately 85 per cent from government contributions, 10 per cent from student fees, and 5 per cent from grants and scholarships. This is information that I have obtained over a number of years from the federation or association of Canadian universities in testimony before committees of this House.

Further, we have been able to ascertain that the Canadian Association of Medical Colleges quoted a 1974 U.S. study which found that in 1972-73—there has been a change because of inflation and I must counsel hon. members about this change—in the United States the cost was approximately \$12,650 per year per student. Considering that a doctor normally takes about six years to graduate to

[Mr. Lambert (Edmonton West).]

the point of internship, this would represent around \$75,000 per annum in 1972-73. I am subject to correction here because these are rough averages, but in any event it shows that it costs more in a Canadian medical school to produce a doctor than it does in the United States, because there is no way that the estimate today of \$150,000 translated back to 1972-73 would in any way compare with the figures I have given with regard to the United States. There is some appreciable percentage difference. It may be 10 per cent and it may be as high as 20 per cent, but there is a distinctive margin between the countries.

Now here comes "la bête noire" of the minister, the CMA, and many others. In 1969 there were 1,347 immigrant doctors who came to Canada, in 1970 there were 1,113; in 1971, 987; in 1972, 988; in 1973, 1,170; in 1974, 1,080; and in 1975 on the basis of a preliminary estimate, 825. These are the statistics obtained from the Department of Manpower and Immigration in reply to my colleague, the hon. member for Mackenzie (Mr. Korchinski), in their answer of May 30, 1975. He put his question in January, 1975.

Mr. Guay (St. Boniface): You are all mixed up.

Mr. Lambert (Edmonton West): No, there is no mix up because it is the department which has given the figure of 825 on the basis of a preliminary estimate for the year 1975.

We have gained so many doctors by graduation from medical school: in 1975, 1,572 doctors at approximately \$135,000 per individual in cost to the public. This comes to \$212,220,000 to train our own Canadian medical graduates. That was the bill for the graduating class in 1975, that is, the public contribution. It was more if we consider their 10 per cent in fees, or another \$15,000 individually, which means another \$22,500,000 or thereabouts. What about the 825 doctors who came into the country? We did not pay one blessed red cent for their training, but the cost of training an equivalent doctor—

Mr. Guay (St. Boniface): What is it?

Mr. Lambert (Edmonton West): The hon. member for Niagara Falls (Mr. Young) will have an opportunity to make his speech.

Mr. Young: Madam Speaker, I wish to rise on a question of privilege. The hon. member has referred to me, but I made no comment during his speech.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Morin): Order, please. This is far from a question of privilege.

Mr. Lambert (Edmonton West): If the hon. member is so keen to identify himself, he may speak. I apologize to my friend, the hon. member for Hamilton Mountain (Mr. MacFarlane), whom I know better under a more familiar name.

Mr. MacFarlane: I accept anything you have to say about me.

Mr. Lambert (Edmonton West): I apologize to the hon. member. I recognized him gratuitously. He should bow and thank me for indicating to his constituents that at least he was in the House during this debate.