

*Medicare*

The Royal Commission on Health Services recognized the need to expand Canada's output of physicians to overcome a prospective deficiency between physician supply and requirements. The task of expanding Canadian medical education facilities is made even more urgent by the likely introduction in the near future of a comprehensive medicare program.

This is a pessimistic report, but when it says that a comprehensive medicare program is likely to be introduced in the near future, surely it is optimistic.

The report then continues:

It takes eight to ten years to plan, build and recruit staff for a new medical school and to graduate its first class, and a further eight to ten years for such graduates to become trained teacher-scientists that will staff new schools.

The minister is well aware of this fact because he pointed out when he spoke to a dental convention in Halifax in June that it would take 20 years to provide enough dentists to increase the dentist population by 5 per cent or 10 per cent. He now proposes to double the doctor population in a year.

At page 2 of this same report the following is stated:

Medical research is inseparable from medical education at the level of under-graduate, post-graduate and continuing education. Teacher-scientists provide the research-oriented education that is appropriate to medicine and science in universities today. It is essential that Canadian universities be staffed with leading teacher-scientists if they are to train effectively new generations of physicians and scientists in their rapidly changing fields.

I will skip a line or two and read the next paragraph as follows:

Medical research is therefore a key consideration for the expansion of medical education and for the development of future health services in Canada. Immediate provision of expanded programs of medical research is required if future physician requirements are to be met and if standards of health care are to be safeguarded and improved.

Let me point out that this is a basic difficulty which faced the national health services in Great Britain. I am sure the minister has seen the editorial which appeared in the *Gazette* on Wednesday, October 12 of this year, which reads in part as follows:

In Great Britain, the 20-year-old national health scheme has helped to promote real difficulties in personnel. Only last month the health minister, Kenneth Robinson, admitted the shortage was becoming acute. The *British Medical Journal* said recently 550 doctors left Britain last year. In mid-September a record 600 British doctors took examinations in London to qualify for practice in the United States.

I will not read the whole editorial as I am sure the minister has seen it, but I think it [Mr. Brand.]

would be appropriate in view of the situation at hand to read the last paragraph, which is as follows:

It may be hoped that between now and July 1, 1968 there will be more discussion about the real issues which medicare raises, and less about the secondary ones; more about substance, and less about style.

The heading of that editorial is "Not Just When But How". I have heard a great deal of talk during this debate about when this scheme is to be instituted, but very little about how it is to be instituted. We in this party have said a good deal about how it should be instituted, in fact so much so that I felt perhaps we should refer our suggestions to the minister on Indian affairs.

Let me read one line from page 3 of the Woods Gundy report as follows:

Although financial support has been increasing, medical research in Canada today is being conducted on an inadequate scale.

The report then quotes from the Royal Commission on Health Services, which has been quoted often during this debate. The debate is beginning to sound like an evangelical meeting at which everyone is fighting with everyone else to ascribe different meanings to the Scripture they are quoting.

Let me point out that this is an excellent report from a commission that was established when the right hon. Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Diefenbaker) was prime minister. This is a report to which we subscribe; but we read it in full, and I will have a few more words to say about that before I conclude.

The report then states:

A substantial increase in capital and operating support for medical research in Canada is needed at once.

● (7:20 p.m.)

I do not think there is any question about this. I can quote extensively from this very excellent report which, incidentally, was not paid for out of government funds but was a result of the co-operation between the Association of Canadian Medical Colleges and university teachers. It is very commendable indeed that they brought in this most excellent report.

In the summary on page 45 of this report they say:

Deficiencies exist, however, at all levels and in all categories of support—

Here they are referring to support for research. They go on to say:

And it is apparent that these deficiencies stem more from a shortage of funds than from a lack of scientific merit in the applications.