

Medicare

The United States, the United Kingdom, Denmark and Norway had 110 persons per bed, and the Netherlands 130 persons per bed.

Canada's ratio of population per physician is 920, ahead of the ratios for countries that have compulsory medicare such as France where the ratio is 950 and the United Kingdom and Sweden. How long will that state of affairs last? Will there be a big brain drain of our doctors and specialists, who are among the finest in the world, to the United States if we bring in a universal, compulsory medicare plan?

The Canadian crude general mortality rate of 8.0 deaths per 1,000 of population is better than the United States where the rate is 9.4 per thousand, or England and Wales with 11.6 or Denmark with 9.3. Canada's record in regard to infant mortality is not as good as that in other countries.

Any increased health benefits to Canadians will come primarily from increasing the numbers of personnel. This demands programs to expand educational and training facilities. I say to the government that when the cabinet is considering these matters they should decide that education should have priority over this type of legislation, because it is as a result of education that we will increase the productivity of the nation and the individual's ability to assume some of the responsibility for the welfare of the country, instead of it becoming a burden on the taxpayer.

In saying that, Mr. Speaker, let me repeat what I said at the beginning. I, and I am sure most of us, believe in some plan to deal with this problem. The Royal Commission stated at page 14, volume 1:

The first requirement is sufficient trained personnel. This demands crash programs to expand the educational and training facilities.

What crash programs has the government instituted to date? None. There has been nothing since the introduction of the vocational training plan at the time we formed the government.

Rather at variance with that statement, at page 295 of volume 1 of the report the Royal Commission on health services stated:

... that in proceeding with a comprehensive program for health services a country does not have to wait until shortages of health personnel have been fully met.

I suppose those two statements are not completely contradictory and that what that means is that the shortage has been partially met. But we must have a crash program on

education first in order to get the trained, skilled personnel to cope with the implementation of this plan and, second, the trained individuals who can take on more responsibility and increase the productivity of the nation.

Also difficult to understand, Mr. Speaker, is this statement of the Royal Commission on health services at page 10, volume 1 of its report:

However large this group may be—

That is the insured group.

—it is not large enough.

I suppose by that they are referring to the percentage of persons left out of plans. I suggest that the government take a look at this aspect because those people are in need of some plan. But why put the taxpayer, Mr. Speaker, to a cost of \$600 to \$800 million a year, or \$4.4 billion by 1971, in order to provide a plan for people who already have a good plan? This is the point of my argument in analysing this bill at this time, which will not become law, even if the government keeps its promise, until two years have elapsed. It is indeed doubtful that any additional expenditure in the nature of compulsory health insurance will improve either the health standards of the Canadian people or increase their prosperity and productivity.

On page 135 of the second annual review of the Economic Council of Canada there is this statement:

We are not at all certain as to what further net stimulus either to national or regionally balanced growth might accrue from increased public investment in health services.

At page 90 there is the following statement:

It has been estimated that the returns on the human investment in high school and university education in Canada are in the range of 15 per cent to 20 per cent per year.

Again, at page 91 of the Council's report it is stated:

The over-all rates of return to the economy for total investment in education would be relatively high—perhaps in the range of 10 per cent—15 per cent—suggesting that relatively greater emphasis should be placed in facilitating expanding investment in education—

I suggest to the government that this should receive priority. Why does the government now waste the time of parliament on a plan that it does not intend to implement for two years, and at a time when there is the highest cost of living in my generation? The government will not measure up to its