

Medicare

made by former speakers with respect to providing more adequate funds for medical research and the development of more medical schools should be listened to.

When we look at the statistics as far as medical practice in Canada is concerned, we find we are very greatly undermanned. In Saskatchewan we have one doctor to about 1,100 people. In the province of Newfoundland, to the far east, I think the figure is only one doctor to 1,900 people. When we go to other parts of the maritimes I believe the figure is one doctor in about 1,400. Yet the best advice I can obtain from the medical profession is that we should have one qualified practitioner for approximately every 850 Canadians.

So when we do bring in this bill, unless we have a speed-up in the development of medical schools and the provision of facilities for people to obtain medical care we will find ourselves grossly undermanned in this country as far as medical personnel are concerned. Therefore, Mr. Speaker, I believe that the government should take the advice of many people in Canada, including members of their own party to whom I have talked privately about this question, and allocate a much larger sum in order to provide facilities for the training of medical personnel.

The first law of nature is self-preservation. In view of this fact it should be obvious that we should spend more money in research for medical services. I believe that the economists in reckoning the gross national product, when considering the loss to this great country of ours through sickness due to the fact that we have not adequate medical facilities—and when we do have the hospitals we sometimes do not have them adequately equipped—calculate the loss figure to be astronomical. This is with reference to the loss to our gross national product because of illness.

This point is particularly interesting to Saskatchewan, because we have health services at the present time and we have already allocated our tax resources to pay for them. If and when this plan comes into effect I believe that under its formula Saskatchewan will receive something like \$14 million a year. I think it would be our intention, when this amount is appropriated to us, to allocate immediately quite a large percentage of it—I believe the hon. member for Saskatoon (Mr. Brand) has suggested at least \$7 million—to assist the medical profession in that province to provide further educational and research facilities, in order to make the plan more effective and operative in the province.

[Mr. Southam.]

With these few remarks, Mr. Speaker, I will give the floor to somebody else, but I do appreciate having had the privilege of making these comments at this time.

Mr. Eric A. Winkler (Grey-Bruce): Mr. Speaker, as we reach the conclusion of the seventh day of debate in regard to this measure, one might very easily assume that everything that needs to be said has been said. Again I have found that as one waits and sees a debate develop, certain things and certain points become somewhat clearer. I think it is necessary this evening that I put on the record that until today's sitting 34 members of this party had spoken, 12 members of the Liberal party, 3 members of the Social Credit party, 5 Creditiste members; and there have been 7 speeches by independents, and 12 New Democratic Party speeches. On the basis of percentage and entitlement, when one considers the number of members of the different parties in the house the Conservative party would be entitled to 217 speeches on this matter. When compared to the New Democratic Party, we would be entitled to a few more than 50 speeches. Therefore I think we are only doing our duty.

Needless to say, we do not have to consider the number of speeches made by the government and its supporters, because they are adamant about putting this measure through the house. I regretted very much today, in the question period, hearing the attitude of the Secretary of State for External Affairs (Mr. Martin) in regard to my questions on old age security payments. Let us not be misled; there is no measure on the order paper in regard to old age security. We could not consider it even if the government wanted to call it today or tomorrow; that would be impossible. Some days ago I guaranteed the government that if they brought this measure in, which in relationship to the need of the elderly people of this country is, I believe, much more important than the position the government is taking in regard to medicare, we would deal with it speedily.

The reason I feel very badly about the position of the Secretary of State for External Affairs is this. I have not been around here as long as he, but I have been here a good number of years, and I have always felt that somehow or another he was a champion of some underdog; I do not know who it is now, but I used to think that at one time. I should be glad to answer the question as to in regard to our old age pensioners, and the tremendous need they have because of the