

Medicare

7.5 million or 41 per cent of the population had no medical insurance whatsoever in 1961, and for some three million more coverage was considered totally inadequate. This is so after 35 years of endeavour on the part of voluntary plans as well as those of commercial insurance companies.

In considering the costs of the scheme we should always keep in mind that expenditures will simply be transferred from the private to the public sector of the economy. It has been estimated that the total extra cost to provide complete universal coverage would amount to a sum variously estimated between \$60 million and \$90 million. In a \$55 billion economy this is not, by any stretch of the imagination, to be considered an intolerable strain. Most of this merely represents people who cannot afford medical care at present.

We are asked to consider the point that medicare will produce excessive demands for services. It is probably true that there will be a backlog of cases coming forward in the early months of the plan's inauguration, and somehow they will have to be looked after on a priority basis. This priority establishment is properly the responsibility of the doctors themselves. They must see that patients are treated according to their needs and not according to their pocketbooks. For too long, perhaps, the well-to-do hypochondriac has monopolized medical attention.

I am, of course, very much in agreement with Mr. Manning when he urges the government to spend more on research. It is only when he makes point number four, expressing his fear that expenditures for long-range research will be subjugated to the political expediency of further expanding the immediate services which count most with the electorate, that I take emphatic exception.

It is true we are behind other nations in research. When Mr. Manning says we should be spending at least \$100 million a year in this field I am delighted with the breadth of his vision. We would be satisfied with much less than that, because at present our expenditure of moneys provided by this government amount to 90 cents per capita as compared to \$6.50 per capita in the United States. This causes a brain drain from Canada to the United States where there is money for research allowing projects to be carried to a conclusion.

I heard on the radio this morning that a doctor in Chicago by the name of Huggins was awarded the Nobel prize for medicine as a result of research done at the University of

[Mr. Howe (Hamilton South).]

Chicago. This man is a Canadian-born and Canadian-educated scientist. He was awarded a medal for work done in the United States, and I suppose he went there to carry out this work because we do not supply sufficient money in this country for research.

Mr. Manning is no doubt as disappointed as I am with the proposed cut in the rate of increase for the next fiscal year. This is no way to ensure the vastly improved climate for research which is absolutely necessary if we are to staff expanding medical schools across the country. Only when we are able to attract competent teacher-scientists to staff these schools will we be assured of an adequate supply of new doctors.

● (9:40 p.m.)

Let me refer to a local matter. In the city of Hamilton McMaster University is starting a medical college which, it is hoped, will be in operation in 1969 with new modern facilities, and it has the money to build these facilities. There are pre-medical students now taking their Bachelor of Science degree at this university. The university has some very progressive ideas with regard to graduating students. With the reduction in the supply of research funds available there is some doubt whether this university will be staffed adequately to teach medical students who would otherwise have sufficient facilities to graduate under an entirely new scheme—which I will not go into—on a speeded-up basis, which has been highly recommended. This scheme cuts down on the length of time taken for graduation. As a matter of fact, this university is cutting down the graduation period from four years to three years by reducing the summer holidays to two weeks rather than the usual four or five months.

Top-flight teachers of this type will never be induced either to come to this country or to stay here until an improved research atmosphere is established on an assured basis. In other words, Mr. Speaker, research people want to be assured that funds will be available with which to carry on the programs they start, rather than starting a program and being frustrated by the fact that there are insufficient funds to complete the work they started. Here again the threatened cut in the rate of increase will amount to a picayune sum in the context of the entire economy. It will be hard to justify it as a counter-inflationary measure. Equally hard to defend is Mr. Manning's contention that money spent on medicare will of necessity have to come from research expenditures. Research is a vital