

**The Hon. the Acting Speaker:** I must inform honourable senators that if the honourable Senator Macnaughton speaks now it will have the effect of closing the debate.

**Hon. Mr. Macnaughton:** Honourable senators, in closing this debate I want to thank all those honourable senators who have taken such an active and most interesting part in it. It was very interesting to me to listen to different political theories, some of which I like and some of which I do not agree with. However, in closing this debate, with your permission I will not try to answer all the questions, because to do so we would be here for days. Furthermore, I have not yet acquired that facility that so many senators in this exalted chamber have displayed in this debate.

There are one or two points I feel I should try to explain very briefly because, like yourselves, I am hopeful that this bill will be referred to committee, where a complete explanation can be provided, where all questions can be asked and complete and satisfying answers given.

There were some very important points made by the honourable Senator Sullivan, Senator Phillips, Senator Gershaw and perhaps one or two others; so, without taking much time, may I put a statement on the record by way of general information.

I am, of course, mindful of the interest shared by all in the vital subject of medical care, and I am particularly appreciative of the views so ably presented by those of our colleagues who are members of the medical profession. For while there is significance for all of us in the provisions of this legislation, its significance is that much greater for physicians, including honourable senators who are physicians, as providers of services.

As honourable senators are aware, I am a member of the legal and not the medical profession; and, as you will also appreciate, I have not had the privilege of studying in depth some of the problems which have been set out during this interesting debate.

In order to acquaint myself with the views of those better versed than myself, therefore, I have turned to the Report of the Royal Commission on Health Services, popularly called the Hall Report, with which the honourable Senator McCutcheon was originally associated. I appreciate that the honourable senator was no longer a member of that commission when its report was completed; and I am not overlooking his statement here that he

would not have concurred in all of its recommendations. Nevertheless, I am sure that honourable senators will agree with me when I say that this commission based its report on an intensive study in depth of the problems with which it was dealing at the time.

In studying this report I have endeavoured to seek an answer to the suggestion made by some speakers in this debate that the medical care program for which provision is made in this Medical Care Bill which we are discussing should be limited to those individuals who lack the means to provide medical care coverage for themselves, the rest of the population being left free to avail themselves, of their own volition, of insurance coverage against the risks posed by ill health. This view has been eloquently enunciated here, and it is one that certainly merits consideration.

I find that the conclusion drawn by the Hall Commission, after careful study and based upon reports of experts, was that public medical care plans should be designed so as to cover the whole population. In connection with a consideration of partial plans, the report points out the following:

The number of individuals who would require subsidy to meet total health services costs is so large that no government could impose the means test procedure on so many citizens or would be justified in establishing a system requiring so much unnecessary administration. The health services will make enough demands on our resources. We must not waste them.

A number of speakers in this debate have mentioned existing provincial programs under which government subsidies are made available for persons needing some financial assistance. I am told that the Canadian Medical Association has advocated this type of a partial plan. In fact, I have received the courtesy of a letter from that association outlining its various points. I believe that this is the type of plan that some honourable senators had in mind when they suggested that federal legislation should be directed towards the more limited type of coverage. I should like to bring to the attention of honourable senators, however, the estimate made by the Canadian Medical Association recently of the number of persons who would require this type of subsidy, namely, five million Canadians. This would mean that a means test would have to be applied to at least this number, although probably it would be more since there would be inevitably those who on examination were found not to be eligible. I am sure that the