

THE ROYAL COLLEGE OF DENTISTS OF  
CANADA—SECOND READING  
—DEBATE ADJOURNED

**Hon. Donald Smith** moved the second reading of Bill S-44, to incorporate the Royal College of Dentists of Canada.

He said: Honourable senators, I am pleased to move second reading of this bill. I consider it a privilege to be asked by the sponsors of the bill to undertake the task of introducing it into the Senate. The sponsors have some choice in this matter because there are in this chamber two members who have practised dentistry for some time or who are now so engaged. I might say a similar situation exists in the House of Commons, where I understand there are several members of the dental profession. I suppose the sponsors chose me, a retired dentist, rather than a practising member just starting on his career both here and in the profession of dentistry, because they thought I would be more neutral in my attitude towards this bill. I can look back on my career as a practising dentist, while my colleague Senator Phillips can look forward to his. I might also add that he may well find that having passed an examination, or for some other reason, he will become a fellow of the proposed Royal College of Dentists of Canada.

Bill S-44 is a bill to incorporate such a college. The purpose of the bill is to recognize and promote high national standards of specialization in the dental profession in all provinces of Canada. The new corporation will be empowered to set the qualifications for the recognition and designation of specialists in established branches of dentistry.

In the incorporation it is also provided that special qualifications in professional areas not necessarily regarded as specialties may also be recognized and designated. It is important to note that the proposed corporation will not interfere in any way with the powers of any provincial dental examining board nor will it override those powers.

I am pleased to be able to tell you that the proposed legislation has been approved by the dental organizations and boards in every province of Canada. It is also supported by the societies in Canada representing the three presently recognized specialties of oral surgery, orthodontics and periodontics. I do not think it necessary to explain those terms for you.

The incorporation is being sought following consideration of the subject by the Canadian Dental Association for a number of years, which resulted in the approval by the association of a resolution in favour of the proposed legislation. The Canadian Dental Association has some 6,000 members,

which number constitutes 99 per cent of all dentists in Canada.

The eight original incorporators named in the bill are all members of the executive council of the Canadian Dental Association. These members represent the interests of the profession and of the public in the various regions of Canada: the Atlantic provinces, Quebec, Ontario, the Prairie provinces, Alberta and British Columbia.

I have been advised that the proposed bill of incorporation is patterned upon similar legislation which, in 1929, incorporated the Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Canada. The bill now before the Senate for consideration seeks the same powers and privileges and has similar objectives.

We are all aware of the growth in the number of specialists and indeed specialties in the field of medicine and surgery which has filled a growing need. The need for specialists in the field of dentistry has not been as acute, but it has been a growing one.

I believe the time has come for the incorporation of a governing body for the dental specialists of Canada. They should be given an opportunity to be nationally recognized and to be designated as specialists. This opportunity will be given them if Parliament sees fit to give its approval to this bill.

One of the effects of the act which incorporated the Royal College of Physicians and Surgeons of Canada has been to limit the practice of medical and surgical specialties to those who are Fellows of the Royal College. This effect has flowed from the general policy of the larger hospitals to restrict appointments to their staffs to this group of recognized specialists. Of course, this policy has not been practical in the smaller hospitals in the towns across the country and, therefore, those who have not yet attained their fellowships are not precluded from practising as specialists in the smaller hospitals. There is a difference, I think, in the application of this proposed legislation to the profession of dentistry, and that follows from the fact that dentistry in general is practised outside hospitals. There will be, therefore, no restrictions imposed upon members of the dental profession who do not become members of the Royal College.

I hope I am forgiven—and I believe my honourable colleague Senator Phillips will be one of the first to forgive me—if I make a personal reference in a suggestion to those who will be the members of the new council, with respect to the appointment of a particular person as one of those chosen without examination, and as an honour, to become a Fellow of the Royal College of Dentists of Canada if and when the legislation passes