

Supply—Health and Welfare

(5) The basis for future control and prevention of dental disease is research and health education.

(6) In the meantime, an enormous treatment service problem exists and greatly increased output of dental personnel is essential.

(7) Provision for the proposed new building in Toronto rests as a heavy responsibility on all concerned.

This is a matter of tremendous concern to the dental profession. I have talked with officials of the Canadian Dental Association and with Dean Ellis of the University of Toronto faculty of dentistry, and they have pointed out, as I have tried to explain here, that this is a situation which not only is critical today but is getting worse year by year. They have also pointed out that dental health is just as important as any other branch of health, but this is a problem which does not seem to be realized by most people in the country. They have urged me to bring it before parliament, to make sure the problem is realized. They say that though they have done their best to have the matter given consideration, they do not believe people realize sufficiently the urgency of this matter. That is why I have brought it forward today.

It is obvious that this situation will be righted only if additional training facilities for dentists and dental hygienists are provided in the various dental schools in the country. The Toronto dental school is an important one, as Dean Ellis has pointed out, and I would be interested to hear from the minister what assistance the federal government intends to give to the building of the additional proposed facilities for this school.

I would urge the minister and the federal government to do everything they can to make grants available to the provinces so that dental schools across the country can be assisted to provide additional training facilities, since it is obvious that many additional dentists and dental hygienists, from what I have quoted this afternoon from these authorities, are very badly needed in this country today.

Mr. Herridge: Mr. Chairman, I make no apology for taking a few minutes of the time of the committee to deal with these estimates. This is a most important department of government, having control of the expenditure of about \$850 million. It would be most unfitting for members not to take the time required to express their opinions on certain matters that come within the jurisdiction of this department. In addition, I have been sitting here for some days expecting these estimates to come forward, because I have promised certain organizations in my constituency and a good number of individuals

[Mr. Hees.]

that I would bring their views concerning certain matters to the attention of the house and of the minister.

I must say that I listened with great interest last evening to the speech of the hon. member for Lanark and his outline of the activities of the world health organization and his opinion of the good work that organization is doing. At this time I rise first of all to support the eloquent plea of the hon. member for Rosetown-Biggarr for the early establishment of a national health insurance plan, even if it means going forward with the plan without certain of the provinces co-operating with the federal government in the beginning.

I have had quite an opportunity in my rather limited experience to see and be convinced of the need for health insurance. I served for some 18 years as president or director of the district hospital in the district from which I come, the Arrow lakes hospital district. During that time I had an opportunity to recognize more and more the burden of medical and hospital costs on persons in the lower income groups.

I can well remember that during the depression it was my duty as president of the hospital, after a person had left the hospital—we often received payment in goods rather than in cash—to make certain that the board got the odd pig the patient had to offer, rather than the doctor in question. I must say the doctor was rather smarter than I on a number of occasions, and beat me to it. But that indicated to me the necessity for a system of health insurance that would take away this sense of insecurity from the lives of our people. The hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre and other members have repeatedly reminded the house and the minister that the Liberal party had health insurance in its program of 1919. My father happened to be the president of the district Liberal federation, and he was interested in health insurance.

But I will say that he supported that plank of the C.C.F. He was very pleased with the C.C.F. interest in a national insurance policy and that was one point on which we could agree, although he took rather a dim view of certain of our policies. As a matter of fact he campaigned against me in 1945 and my mother, who was a Conservative, campaigned for me.

Mr. Martin: Your mother had the better of the argument there.

Mr. Herridge: I can agree with that. I must say, Mr. Chairman, that I have great