

The Budget—Mr. Thompson

• (3:50 p.m.)

There is just one more thought I would leave with the House. It relates to our development assistance program to the rest of the world. We would like to think that we have a foreign aid program which is a model that can be held up to other nations of the world. We would give the impression now that the new International Development Centre about to be established in Canada really is going to do something about our overseas responsibilities. But the unavoidable impression one receives from our present policies with regard to development assistance is that we are backing away from our responsibilities.

As the World Bank report, under the authorship of a former prime minister, Mr. Pearson, points out, unless we understand partnership in development as far as the world economy is concerned, we are in for trouble. If we do not share in that development program so urgently required today, markets are not going to be available for what we produce. Our share of the world wheat markets has dropped from 48 per cent or 49 per cent to something like 17 per cent or 18 per cent in the last five years. In the underdeveloped areas of the world that do not have the opportunity of forging ahead, we are going to have an even smaller market for export trade in all categories.

Though we are the third richest country in the world, last year we gave in aid only .49 per cent, less than one half per cent of our GNP, standing 16th out of 16 countries studied by the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development. This, Mr. Speaker, is not adequate. How can this situation be related to the fact that we are asking for controlled inflation and at the same time a more equitable tax structure as it relates to the taxpayer. The fact is unless we are able to assure our economy of a continuing export market for our products, we are going to find ourselves in a worse situation than ever before.

It comes down to one last point, and that is the absolute necessity for monetary reform at the international level. We have supported and still take a leading part in the committee of nations set up to study this problem. Herein lies the basic problem that restricts our trading patterns and makes it difficult for the developing countries of the world to face up to the challenge of a world economy. I think that the Minister of Finance in his budget or in his white paper statement should have referred to this very important fact. It is

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time that the Canadian government took a lead in trying to bring about some over-all international monetary reform. To continue patching up the monetary system as we did preceding the last election campaign in 1968—the truth about that action is just now becoming public knowledge—is to bring reflection upon the growth and viability of our economy, especially as it relates to the development of our natural resources which are of vital concern to our future economy. Thus, Mr. Speaker, I hope that the government will do something better than was outlined in the budget or the white paper. The situation facing us cannot continue and it grows more serious day by day.

Mr. H. E. Stafford (Elgin): Mr. Speaker, on Sunday, April 5, 1970, the Minister of National Health and Welfare (Mr. Munro) was interviewed on the CBC program "Under Attack". During the program he was questioned by a concerned student regarding Canada's health manpower status, our reliance on foreign medical manpower to expand our health delivery personnel and our failure to build adequate medical educational facilities.

In reply to a question on educational facilities and their expansion, the minister stated the government policy was to put "a limit on the degree of expansion". His reasoning is difficult to accept in view of the facts at our disposal. He stated "I am one of those who have not really bought this story that we are that short of health personnel in this country. I think our doctor-patient ratio is somewhere between one to 950 people. It is probably one of the highest in the world; in fact, it is one of the highest in the world".

It is unfortunate that the minister takes this myopic view of medical manpower, when there are hundreds of communities in this country without physicians and others are grossly undermanned. The problem is obviously of such a nature and such proportion that the *Toronto Daily Star* of Saturday, April 11, 1970 was moved to devote over two pages and a covering editorial to decry the short supply and need for increased physician coverage. The *Daily Star* quoted situation after situation in detailing the problems in many communities.

The minister, in his telecast, quoted Canada's physician-population ratio as one in 950, whereas it is actually somewhat lower, namely one in 750. In terms of physicians per 100,000 population it is 130 physicians per 100,000 population for easier comparison