Medicine and Modern Democracy

EXTENSION OF REMARKS
OF
HON. WILLIAM J. GREEN, JR.
OF PENNSYLVANIA
IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES
Thursday, July 25, 1963

Mr. GREEN of Pennsylvania. Mr. Speaker, the Honorable JOHN E. FOG-

ARTY, the distinguished Member of this House from the State of Rhode Island, has devoted a great measure of his time and effort in the advancement of medicine and allied sciences in our advanced schools of learning.

It was through his individual efforts, although he is not prone to admit it, that appropriations have been made available for financial aid to students aspiring to these professions. His efforts have been recognized by Members of Congress and the medical faculties and by the public press, which on many occasions commended his untiring work to promote the health and welfare of the people of this great Nation.

Congressman FOGARTY's recent address on June 11 at the commencement exercises of Women's Medical College of Pennsylvania, a renowned institution of medical learning, summarizes his expanded knowledge on the subject of the urgent needs and the requirements to meet such needs in this dedicated professional field. It is well that his discourse on the subject of urgent medical needs in these United States be forcibly brought to the attention of our people through every media possible.

Mr. Speaker, for this reason I insert in the RECORD a copy of the text of Congressman FOGARTY's address to the faculty, students, and others who attended the commencement exercises at Women's Medical College of Pennsylvania, and who were fortunate to hear directly from a recognized authority on this subject which will have such a vital impact on this and future generations in this country:

MEDICINE AND MODERN DEMOCRACY

(Commencement address by Hon. JOHN E. FOGARTY)

President Fay, honored guests, members of the faculty, members of the 111th class to graduate from the Woman's Medical College of Pennsylvania, and their families and friends, it is an inspiring experience to be present as this group of outstanding young women is about to take its place in the noble company of those who have entered the profession of medicine from this great college in an unbroken procession of graduates since the year 1851.

And it is with a feeling of genuine humility and appreciation that I receive the honor you have bestowed upon me today. It has been my privilege to serve for the past 16 years either as chairman or ranking member of the House Appropriations Committee which deals with the health sciences. I have come to know and to appreciate the work of physicians in a way which is not granted to many men. And I have considered it my food fortune that I have been able to do my part in assuring proper levels of Federal support in cooperation with State, local, and private institutions for the advancement of medical education and research. Consequently, I am well aware of the greatness and excellence of the Woman's Medical College, from which 2,664 women doctors have been graduated to help make the place and role of women in medicine what it is today.

In the year 1963 it can be said that the struggle to gain for women their righful place of recognition in medicine has indeed been won. It has been written that "The measure of man's cooperation with man in the conquest of nature is the true measure of progress." In modern medicine progress is being measured by the constant cooperation of men and women physicians in both research and practice. And I have no doubt whatever but that the members of this graduating class will play their part to the fullest extent in pushing the frontiers of medical progress even further forward.

As their role will be important to their noble profession, so it will be equally important to their country in the great struggle of our times to preserve world peace and advance the cause of liberty and democracy in the face of the threats and dangers which confront us.

The work of doctors and medical researchers everywhere in the world is a mighty force for peace and freedom. As one who has long been identified with the U.S. participation in the work of the World Health Organization, I have been very much impressed with this fact. Wars and dictatorships are bred in poverty and disease. Those who help to eradicate malaria, those who labor to develop community water supply programs, those who promote international cooperation in fighting the great plagues of mankind—are all helping to create world conditions that will be favorable to the growth of free societies and a more secure peace.

When, in 1960, Congress passed the International Health Research Act, that measure was primarily intended to help support medical research by foreign scientists whenever and wherever it is evident that their work will advance the health status of the United States, as well as that of the country in which the research is conducted. It was my privilege to introduce that legislation in the House, and I have been gratified not only by its scientific aspects but also by the way in which it has brought about projects of international cooperation that have survived a number of periods of grave international tension.

In the World Health Organization today, American doctors and medical research scientists are actively engaged in helping to disseminate research information. They are seeking for more effective ways to surmount language barriers so that the explosion in medical literature, which is quite a problem even here at home, can be handled more efficiently for the mutual benefit of physicians and other workers in the health sciences. I am confident that as their work progresses, it will serve not only to improve the world's health, but also to prevent the spread of the disease of war.

Here at home, we must also realize the essential part which medicine and all the branches of medical research play in keeping America strong and free. In adding up our country's resources for national strength, the health sciences must be given a leading place. Medicine ministers directly to human beings and human beings continue to be the most valuable, the most remarkable, and the most significant creatures on this planet. In an age of machines and advanced technology man is not becoming obsolete. The recent wonderful performance of Gordon Cooper in bringing his space vehicle back to earth under manual controls is dramatic evidence that the human factor still counts for a good deal, even in such a highly technical field as that of space flight.

As man moves out into space a whole new branch of medical study will move with him. And we can be sure that the work of free doctors in a free society will have an ever-increasing importance for the winning of those victories for democracy which will be gained by our astronauts of the future—among whom there will in time be numbered a good many physicians. It is in fact quite likely that one or more of today's graduates may have the distinction of being a woman pioneer in this field as Dr. Ann Preston once pioneered in the field of winning recognition for women in medicine itself.

But if American medicine is to play its full and proper part in the life of our modern democracy, we must solve two problems which will not yield to pure laboratory research. First we must greatly increase the number of qualified physicians and other professionals in the health sciences. Then we must also work out more equitable ways of bringing the wonders of modern medicine to all of our people—regardless of their race, age, creed, or economic situation. And we must do both of these things without in any way interfering with the traditionally free and private character of the practice of the science and art of the physician.

Earlier this year, a nationally distributed Sunday magazine carried an article by Dr. Fay in which she convincingly discussed the gravity of the increasing shortage of physicians. The plain fact is that just to maintain the present ratio of physicians to population will require, over the next 10 years, a 50-percent increase in the number of graduates from our medical schools. And that is a minimal figure for the protection of the health of the people.

Where are we going to find the money to build and operate the equivalent of 20 new medical schools which will be needed? I see no practical answer to that question which does not include extensive Federal aid. As Dr. Howard Rusk has put it, "After 10 years of frustration, delay, and defeat, it now appears likely that Congress will at last enact a program of Federal aid to medical education."

Dr. Rusk was, of course, referring to the bill known as H.R. 12—the Health Professions Educational Assistance Act of 1963—which the House passed on April 12 and sent to the Senate. This legislation is a step forward because it does provide for a 3-year, $175 million program of matching grants for the construction of teaching facilities for medical, dental, and other health personnel, and for a 3-year, $30 million program of loans for students of medicine and allied sciences.

I am, of course, disappointed about the omission of a scholarship program in this bill. I believe that a significant proportion of those who have the potential to become physicians are not doing so because they simply cannot afford the expense of medical school education. These people are handicapped—not by lack of brains, but by lack of funds. The present student loan program offers up to $2,000 a year to the student at a reasonable rate of interest and is, in a measure, going to offset the economic handicap, but I still believe a scholarship program—not requiring repayment—would have been better.

I am also disappointed at the sacrifice of a provision which would have forgiven a portion of the student repayment in those instances where young doctors set up practice and remained in areas of severe physician shortages—but this sacrifice was not too high a price to pay for the passage of a measure so long delayed and so desperately needed. The measure now goes to the Senate, where it is hoped and believed that a friendly reception awaits it. This is particularly gratifying to me and to some of my colleagues, who have tried so often and failed in the face of a situation which has continued to deteriorate while our colleagues continued to deliberate. I believe that we have a breakthrough, at last.

With medicine, as with other sciences, we have not yet developed all the social and political techniques which will enable the whole country to benefit from the rapid advance of research. Through grants administered by the National Institutes of Health we have expanded the freedom of medical research to undertake projects that could not have been possible 10 or 15 years ago. Now we must also develop forms of national health insurance which will widen the freedom of the American people to make use of the benefits of medical knowledge.

You who graduate today will have the high privilege and the grave responsibility of one of our most honored professions. As you exercise that privilege and undertake that responsibility with a full awareness of your equally important role as women and citizens, you will make your lasting contribution to the interdependent causes of the health, the peace, and the freedom of mankind.