

SPEECH OF HONORABLE JOHN E. FOGARTY, M. C. 2ND DISTRICT RHODE ISLAND AT THE 9TH ANNUAL CONVENTION OF THE NATIONAL FEDERATION OF LICENSED PRACTICAL NURSES AT THE SHIRATON-BILTMORE HOTEL, TUESDAY, OCTOBER 7, 1958

First, let me say how happy I am that you have chosen my home State of Rhode Island for your annual convention this year. I like to recall that in 1949, when a group of practical nurse leaders from seven states met to discuss what they felt was a growing need for a national practical nurses' organization, Rhode Island was one of the States which sent representatives to the meeting.

I like to recall, too, that when your organization was incorporated, one of Rhode Island's own licensed practical nurses was an original signer of the incorporation. That was Mrs. Madeline G. Kalin, who later served as a State president in Rhode Island.

That now historic meeting, so portentous for practical nursing and for all who need your services, took place only nine years ago. Mrs. Kalin and the rest of that original group must be very gratified at the phenomenal growth that has transpired since then. I am told that today your association embraces 44 State organizations and has 32,000 members.

At that time of your first organizing meeting, no State in this country had mandatory licensure of "all who nurse for hire." Few States had even permissive licensing. The place of the practical nurse on the health

team was not definite or even fully accepted. Now, mandatory licensure of practical nurses has come into being in several States. Practical nurses now sit as either advisors or as full voting members on the boards of examiners in a majority of the States of the country. Through formula grants, the Federal government has made funds available to State Boards of Education for the training of practical nurses through vocational education programs. The quality and content of training for the practical nurse has been standardized. Their nursing responsibilities in the hospital, in the home, and in public health -- responsibilities that have been constantly expanding since 1949 -- have been defined. And the role of the practical nurse in the whole health picture has been confirmed.

It is as important members of the health team that I wish to address you here tonight. For 18 years, just twice the period that your group has been organized, I have had the honor to represent the State of Rhode Island in the Congress of the United States. For sixteen of those years I have served on the subcommittee that considers legislation and appropriations affecting the health of our Nation. For the past 12 years I have been either chairman of that committee or ranking minority member. So, although I am

neither physician, nurse, nor member of any other of the health professions, I do consider myself as being, in a way, also a part of the health team.

I am proud to think that through my efforts, and those of my colleagues in the Congress, means were provided for the health programs, including a major increase in funds for medical research that has led to life-saving accomplishments and to new procedures for treating and even preventing disease and disability.

Because these accomplishments affect you in your great work of helping to care for the sick, I should like to tell you about what we in the Congress, and particularly my committee, have done during the past year to push forward toward further advances in the health field.

Of primary interest to you was our action in connection with the appropriation for the practical nurse training program under the George-Barden Act. The appropriation for this year is \$4,000,000. This is \$1,000,000 less than the authorization under the Act, and you may be sure I inquired into the reason for this during our hearings on the appropriation request. I could scarcely believe that we had caught up with the shortage in licensed practical

nurses that was so acute a couple of years ago, even though more than 7,000 were trained during the first year of the program and considerably more are being trained this year.

The reason I was given for the appropriation request being less than the full amount authorized is that the States, which this year must match Federal funds dollar for dollar, might not be able to raise the matching money at the \$5,000,000 level. This, I understand, is contrary to the situation as it exists in Rhode Island. I am advised that the Federal allocation of funds to this State for this fiscal year is \$19,566 whereas the amount of federal money estimated as needed by state authorities is \$29,300. Originally, the Practical Nursing Program was started in the State of Rhode Island in 1951 with an appropriation of \$26,000. At that time, one school in Providence was established. In the intervening years, schools were started in Woonsocket and Warwick and one is now contemplated for the City of Newport. Since the initiation of the first school, the appropriation of the State has doubled so that the last amount was approximately \$55,000. Last year for the first time, the Federal Government made an allocation of \$45,000 available. Of this, the State of Rhode Island spent \$27,742 leaving an

unspent balance of \$17,257.

There is another reason, too, I am told for the reduction in this year's appropriation. This has to do with difficulties in arranging for suitable facilities and qualified personnel for setting up the right kind of really good training programs in the schools. You people know more about the details of these difficulties than I do, and I am sure you will hear from your leaders during this convention of steps to take to help solve the problems.

The real point here is that this Federal-State program for practical nurse training emphasizes quality of training as well as numbers of those trained. With this view I heartily concur. The men and women who enter this field, who dedicate themselves to help care for the sick, the aged and the infirm, deserve the best training that can be given them. My fellow citizens in Rhode Island and throughout the nation agree with me on this, I am sure. We in the Congress have shown this to be our conviction. We have made funds available for this purpose and we applaud your efforts and those of your leaders in seeing that these funds are wisely expended to the end we all desire -- an increasing number of qualified and well-trained practical nurses standing shoulder to shoulder with other members of the

Nation's health team.

Now let me turn to some of the other activities of the Congress this past year in the health field. One of them I know will be of special interest to you because it relates to many of the people who are your patients or who will become your patients in the years ahead.

These are the older people in our communities. With a population that now exceeds 170 million, and with almost 10 percent of that population over age 65, the problems of aging are of tremendous national significance. These older people account for about 40 percent of the chronically ill in this country and they occupy 22 percent of the long-term hospital beds. They require between 80 and 90 percent of the nursing home beds and supplies. These facts are well known to you, although you see them not just as cold statistics but as ailing and infirm men and women to whom you give help and care.

Not all the older citizens in our nation, fortunately, are sick or disabled. But too many of them, even of those who are in good health and

able to get about, lead lonely, frustrated, useless lives. Part of their distress, and it is an acute distress, stems from the fact that we as a nation fail to recognize them as a group having special needs and different kinds of problems. We cannot begin to find solution for these needs until we have studied the nature of the problems in every state throughout the nation.

Because I am convinced of the importance of this problem, and of the need to study it from every angle, I introduced a bill, which has now become law, calling for a White House Conference on Aging to be held no later than January, 1961. The reason for setting the date so far in the future is to give the States time to make studies of their own. Then we can pool the knowledge and experience of different parts of the country, and having assessed the needs, we can study and provide the solutions that are required. When you go back home to your own communities, you may be called on to assist in some of these studies of aging at the State and local level. I hope that you will use every opportunity to contribute from your knowledge and experience an understanding of the true dimensions of the problems and

ideas for their solution.

Closely related to the problem of the aging is the problem of chronic disease. As medical science has pushed back the infectious diseases, more and more of our population is living to the age when cancer, heart disease, arthritis and metabolic diseases take their toll in suffering and disability and premature death. Because so many of the patients you help to nurse are afflicted with one or another of these conditions, you will, I know, be glad to hear of steps the Congress has taken with regard to them.

Through our appropriations to the National Institutes of Health, which is part of the Public Health Service in the Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, we have provided for \$75.2 million to be used in cancer research and control; \$45.6 million for research in heart disease, particularly on arteriosclerosis, strokes and anticoagulants; and \$30.2 million in research on arthritis and metabolic diseases ranging from diabetes and ulcers to gastrointestinal disorders in general.

Many of you are working in mental hospitals, helping to nurse the unfortunate men and women of all ages who are suffering from delusions,

hallucinations and other aspects of mental illness. I have been told that your work has been greatly eased and the results of your efforts have become more rewarding since the advent of the new drugs for calming the disturbed and stimulating the depressed. You will be glad, therefore, to know that there will be a step-up in studies in psychopharmacology as a result of the increase in funds appropriated to the National Institute for Mental Health. In addition, there will be increased emphasis on studies on schizophrenia and alcoholism. The appropriation for this Institute for the coming year is \$52.4 million, and I am confident that with the increased funds made available, the mental health program will move forward in a way gratifying to all of us.

I know that practical nurses are much in demand in homes where the mother has just returned from the hospital with a new baby. It may have been the sad experience of some of you to have gone into such a home where the baby had been born with some defect or malformation or with brain damage resulting in a disease such as cerebral palsy or in mental

retardation. At such times I know how your hearts must be touched by the grief of the parents and by contemplation of what the future will be for the poor little infant.

The problem involves many more than those unfortunate ones whom you may encounter in your work as practical nurses in homes and institutions. There are 500,000 people in the United States today who have cerebral palsy traceable to brain damage occurring in the year or so surrounding birth. And there are an estimated 4,500,000 Americans who are mentally retarded. About one-third of them are children.

Happily, there is now a big program going forward to learn more about the causes of infant deaths, mental defects and retardation, and about the ways to prevent them. A large part of the \$29.2 million which my committee recommended and the Congress approved for studies in neurology and blindness will be devoted to this program. I am sure those of you from Rhode Island share my pride in the key role our State is playing in the Nation's neurological program. It is the home base of the collaborative investigation coordinated by the National Institute of Neurological Diseases

and Blindness to study and evaluate factors which bring on such conditions as cerebral palsy and mental retardation. Brown University's Department of Biology and Psychology was one of the first professional groups to join in this important collaborative study. The Providence Lying-In Hospital, the Rhode Island Hospital, Miriam Hospital, Emma Pendleton Bradley Home, and the Meeting Street School are all cooperating with the University in this program.

This is but a partial review of the year's work of my Committee and myself and our colleagues in the Congress. I think you will agree that it indicates a banner year for legislation affecting the health of our nation. We in the Congress, however, were not unmindful of the fact that disease knows no boundaries, and that new knowledge for the promotion of health may be gained in other countries besides our own. We were mindful, too, of the fact that the peoples and nations of the world can be brought into understanding and harmony more quickly and completely on the subject of health than any other subject. So in the closing days of the session I introduced a bill to provide for the mobilization of the maximum international health and medical research resources. My colleague in the Senate, Lister Hill of

Alabama, introduced the same bill. We both had in mind bringing the subject before the American people so that next year we will be able to undertake its passage.

I have spoken to you of progress and achievements in promotion of medical research and health. Yet you and I know that much remains to be done. The theme of your convention here this year is Meeting the Challenge. There are many challenges to be met by your organization, I am sure. There are challenges to extend and improve training of practical nurses. There are challenges to gain better recognition of your place on the health team. Your leaders here will speak to you in some detail on how you may work to meet these challenges.

But there is another, greater challenge that faces you and me and the citizens of this great State and of our nation. That is the challenge to work continuously, each of us in our own sphere, for the improvement of the health of all mankind. I know that each of you will strive to meet that challenge in the days and years ahead. I can assure you that I shall continue to devote my efforts to meeting that great and vital challenge.