Major Post Rumoured But M.P. Misses Out

by Farmer Tissington Special to The Herald

Late News: Dr. Harley was not included in the appointments announced on Sunday by The Prime Minister.

OTTAWA — Halton county
MP Dr. Harry Harley may be
named as one of about 20 parliamentary secretaries to cabinet
ministers in the new parliament
which opens here January 18.

Prime Minister Pearson said that he expects to announce the list of new secretaries "within a few days." While he gave no indication of which of the Liberal back and middle benchers will be appointed, the name of Dr. Harley figures in speculation here.

STAMPS

He will be returning to Ottawa as a comparative veteran in the Liberal ranks, first winning election in 1962 and repeating the wins in 1963 and again last November 8. The Halton MP is regarded as one of the "bright young ginger group" in the Liberal caucus and for the last two sessions he held the position of chairman of a special committee on Food and Drugs.

HEALTH POST?

with his medical background and with medicare expected to be one of the major pieces of government legislation on the books. Dr. Harley appears to many as a logical choice as parliamentary secretary to Health and Welfare Minister Allan Mac-Eachen. The fact that Mr. Mac-Eachen is from Nova Scotia serves to strengthen the chances of an Ontario MP being named as his assistant.

Interviewed here following the close of the Liberal party caucus, Dr. Harley said he had no idea if he was being considered for one of the secretarial posts. These are sought after by back bench government MPs because they sometimes lead to cabinet rank and they not only carry certain prestige but a \$4,000 salary increase per year as well.

"If I was named as a parliamentary secretary, I would then not likely be re-elected chairman of the special Food and Drug Committee," Dr. Harley said. "I hope and expect the committee will be re-established soon after the session starts."

Before the election was called the committee had made plans to hear testimony from some 20 groups and organizations on the subject of the cost of drugs. Earlier, the committee reported on drug safety.

STAMPS

"I am in favour of lowering the cost of drugs by removing the 11 per cent sales tax providing the saving is passed on to the consumer and not simply put in the pockets of the druggists," Dr. Harley said,

TAX HEARINGS

The committee is expected to recommend the tax removal but whether it can complete its hearings in time to have the item included in finance minister Mitchell Sharp's first budget is questionable. The hearings are expected to last for about three months and the budget is normally brought down in March or April.

The Haiton MP said he also personally favours a medical care plan and feels that the July 1, 1967 target date set by the government is a realistic one. He said that government will be under considerable pressure on medicare from many sides with most Liberal MPs and the New Democrats pressing for quick action while some provinces and the medical profession may oppose it.

"I feel the terms of medicare laid down by Mr. Pearson are broad enough that there is room for everyone under the plan as long as consultations are continued with the provinces and the medical profession to work out some of the objections that have been raised," Dr. Harley said.

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