

## "A Blunt Diagnosis"

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## A Blunt Diagnosis <sup>B3C</sup> 11-9-61

**B**ECAUSE of its unusual candor, the preliminary study on the feasibility of establishing a medical school in Toledo provides an excellent beginning for the citizens committee exploring the possibilities.

Prepared by a medical educator who made an on-the-spot survey as a professional consultant, the report really lays it on the line:

- ▶ It could well take 10 years to plan, organize, and build the initial facilities.
- ▶ There would be a monumental job of raising from \$17 million to \$24 million to finance a medical science building, a 350-bed teaching hospital, and related facilities.
- ▶ Provisions would have to be made for operating costs estimated at \$2 million a year.
- ▶ And further improvements would be required in the University of Toledo's graduate programs and research activities to help serve a future medical training center.

Spelled out in these terms, this report is scarcely a sop to the local committee. Nor does it provide politicians with any glittering objectives to promise willy nilly. The requirements are formidable, and it is best to understand this at the outset.

But the possibilities are by no means unattainable, as the author of the report, Dr. William R. Willard, can attest. As vice president of the University of Kentucky's medical center and dean of its medical college, he notes that his own state has enabled the University of Louisville, a municipal institution like TU, to operate its own medical school. He also makes an excellent case for Ohio's need for additional medical training facilities.

**N**CESSARILY, Dr. Willard's preliminary study leaves a good many questions and decisions open to further study and more detailed consideration. Thus one does not have to agree with all of his tentative recommendations to accept the basis on which additional study should proceed.

It is unreasonable to expect, as he assumes, that the University of Toledo could develop its graduate studies and research programs in all of the arts, sciences, and humanities comparable to major universities within the 10 years he envisages for the start of a medical school.

TU already has many commitments to new programs that are not yet fully developed. There are new engineering facilities, for example, along with a related program of nuclear training and research, plus other added programs that must be digested. These developments cannot be jeopardized or slowed by additional responsibilities.

A medical teaching center should be developed on its own, without encumbering TU's existing efforts to improve itself and to better serve the community.

Dr. Willard also seems overly concerned with the current trend prescribing physical integration of existing campuses with medical teaching facilities. He goes all-out for a future medical school on the TU campus, where available land could severely limit future growth of a medical center.

Many of the leading medical schools are physically separated from their parent institutions. And it can be questioned whether there is any real academic tie between what goes on in a medical school and the pursuits of professors, researchers, and graduate students in the traditional academic disciplines—even the basic sciences.

It would be a mistake, it seems to us, for the local committee to downgrade the possibilities of using existing vacant public land and facilities elsewhere. The Maumee Valley Hospital area, for example, has considerable land adjacent to existing county medical institutions, and close to Toledo State Hospital, where a site could be developed into a major medical center encompassing a wide variety of related activities. Scott Park, which TU already holds title to, is another possibility.

Obviously, the citizens committee has plenty of ground to cover on needs, finances, and tie-ins with state and federal programs before it can reach any firm conclusions. Fortunately, Dr. Willard's blunt diagnosis provides a very realistic basis for the committee to carry on its studies.