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REMARKS BY GOVERNOR JAMES B. EDWARDS  
MCLEOD REGIONAL MEDICAL CENTER GROUNDBREAKING  
AUGUST 24, 1976 - 11:00 A. M.

There is no greater symbol of man's compassion for his fellow man than this--the erection of a medical complex designed to treat the sick, heal the curable, comfort the convalescent, and fight with ALL the marvels of today's technology to prolong useful, productive lives.

The citizens of the Pee Dee area will be the immediate beneficiaries of this, the "McLeod Regional Medical Center"...

I have championed the need in our State for hospitals such as this which are accessible to the people...medical technology which can't be reached can't be effective!! Our goal has been to place advanced medical services within 60 minutes of every citizen in the Palmetto State.

The McLeod Regional Medical Center represents the full attainment of this goal...and I am truly delighted to stand with you in the fulfillment of the goal!!

With two interstate highways and U.S. 501 near this site, it is accessible to all of the Pee Dee citizens.

This Regional Medical Center brings with it a second BIG PLUS!! The way will now be open for you to participate in the Medical University's Family Practice Program. Your doctors, dentists, nurses, and health paraprofessionals will have the distinct advantage of being near a teaching hospital. New life-saving techniques will be taught in your own back yard...at this facility!!!

The Pee Dee Region may expect to capture some of the fine young doctors who will serve their residency training in this center.

It has long been recognized that we need to keep our young doctors with us...the McLeod Regional Medical Center gives you a definite advantage...Use it well!!

Best of all...this facility means local folks can be treated at home!! There is perhaps no miracle of medicine which can excel human love. I like the local concept!!

Because of cost, the home town hospitals have not been able to provide the advantages of this Regional concept...but, I hasten to remind you...you have retained the best of both by choosing a central site which is highly accessible.

What does the future hold? A neurologist... a neuro-surgeon...a psychiatric unit, renal dialysis equipment...a full complement of highly trained and skilled medical professionals...Yes, it looks as though our dreams of a better tomorrow will be fulfilled today.

This dream found its roots more than 70 years ago when Dr. F. H. McLeod opened an eight-bed infirmary here. From this forth-right beginning, we now erect a 300-bed monument as a tribute not only to Dr. McLeod but to all of those Dr. McLeods who pioneered Family Medical Practices in the Palmetto State. God only knows the sacrifices these men made with one and only one reward...that inner glow which comes from helping our fellowman...the days of chicken-bartering may be gone, but the memories of these great gentlemen linger on!!

It took more than chickens to pave the way. The City of Florence donated this lovely 30 acre site. Private contributions totaling over 1.6 million dollars have been raised. Federal, state, and local governmental agencies have provided more than 29 million dollars in loans and grants. The Duke Endowment has given one million dollars. Since 1924, this Endowment has contributed more than 32 million dollars to Palmetto State hospitals.

From the days of Dr. F. H. McLeod to this  
our Bicentennial year...South Carolina has placed  
her values where they count the most...on her people!!

It is fitting that as we dedicate this site  
with formal groundbreaking ceremonies, I call  
special attention to four gentlemen. These men...  
singly and collectively...have made considerable  
sacrifice...sacrifice which has led to the attainment  
of this day!!!

J. Givens Young, chairman of the hospital board and  
chairman of the Planning and Building Committee.

David H. McLeod, vice-chairman of the hospital board.

James C. McLeod, Jr., a trustee and a nephew of the  
founder.

and Dr. Louis C. Wright, Jr., a member of the medical  
staff.