

Adjournment Debate

resolution in June of 1975 opposing the transfer of Deer Lodge Hospital to Manitoba.

In the same vein, Mr. Speaker, the Standing Committee on Veterans Affairs should look into the problems the employees will face if such a transfer takes place.

If, on the other hand, it is not possible for the federal government and Manitoba to reach an agreement through negotiation on the Deer Lodge Hospital, then I would urge the federal government to drop the matter and continue operating the Deer Lodge Hospital. As the Minister of Veterans Affairs said on May 27, 1976:

If it becomes evident, however, that it is not possible to negotiate the transfer of these hospitals on satisfactory terms, we will proceed with our plans for modernization.

I hope the minister and the government will respect the needs of the veterans and employees at Deer Lodge Hospital.

Mr. S. Victor Railton (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Veterans Affairs): Mr. Speaker, it would be better to say nothing in reply to the letter the hon. member read, since I think it cannot be taken as correct.

With regard to the question concerning discussions between my department and the province of Manitoba pertaining to the transfer of Deer Lodge Hospital in Winnipeg, I must reiterate that there are no negotiations, as such, regarding the transfer. There have been some discussions and the purpose of this dialogue is more or less to determine if the province is interested and if things can be worked out to the satisfaction of all concerned.

The policy of transferring veterans' hospitals to local authorities is, as you know, based on the determination that veterans should receive the best possible hospital care. I would not attempt to go into the programs of hospital modernization, research, geriatric programs and a variety of others that come under the authority of this critical branch of veterans affairs. But I can say that the treatment services branch of my department devotes the most scrupulous attention to the changing needs of our veteran population.

It is my own belief—and I am speaking for the minister, Mr. Speaker—that the biggest benefit for the entitlement of veterans with service incurred disabilities has been the transfer of these hospitals and their continuing association with universities across Canada. This availability of health services could not be assured to entitled veterans under our own limited institutional operations. Our hospitals are slowly becoming nursing homes.

In addition to the guaranteed priority access beds for the care of disability pensioners there is in every transfer provision for priority access, after transfer, to all chronic and domiciliary beds. Transfer arrangements also, however, provide for the integration of our services with those of the community. Because of that, the particular arrangements that we negotiate on transfer may vary from province to province, depending on the level and availability of services in each province.

[Mr. McKenzie.]

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Turner): Order, please. I regret to interrupt the parliamentary secretary but must inform him that his allotted time has expired.

PUBLIC SERVICE—REQUEST FOR INVESTIGATION OF DISMISSAL OF JIRVAN SHAH

Mr. Walter Baker (Grenville-Carleton): Mr. Speaker, on May 25, 1977, I raised in this House the case of Mr. Jirvan B. Shah, a public servant employed by the public service of Canada until he was dismissed. I asked the government to investigate his dismissal, with a view to having him reinstated. A number of public servants have brought their cases to me, sir, but not one of them has affected me as much as Mr. Shah's.

I want the House to understand that he is a professional engineer, trained at Queen's University, Canada and he joined the public service in October, 1965, as a metallurgical engineer. He has been employed in that same position, doing that same work, for 11 years. Finally he was declared incompetent. For the first seven years of his employment his performance was rated as average. In March, 1973, his supervisor, Mr. T. W. Heaslip, rated his performance as unsatisfactory. As a result of this evaluation he requested a review committee to investigate his case. That review committee was comprised of Mr. H. A. Fawcett, chief accident investigations division, MOT, Mr. S. Grossmith, a test pilot and engineer at MOT, S. McCormach, a staffing officer with MOT, and N. Bura, a staffing officer of the Public Service Commission.

This review committee made a thorough investigation and heard evidence given by Mr. Shah and Mr. Heaslip. It concluded that he was competent, recommended that he be provided with alternate employment and that his performance be reassessed in six months. Part of that recommendation was implemented. Mr. Shah was employed in the Department of Energy, Mines and Resources, under the supervision of Dr. Eric Smith who, after a six month period, said Mr. Shah did his work adequately. It is important to remember that between 1965 and 1972 his position carried the title of metallurgical engineer.

● (1810)

From 1973 on, as a consequence of reorganization in the division, the title of the position was changed to material failure analyst without any change in the duties and responsibilities of the position. The job description has remained the same since 1965.

After that ten-month period in 1974, he returned to the Ministry of Transport and the same position. He received a very unsatisfactory appraisal for a four-month period by a new supervisor, Mr. McLeod, who only supervised him from April to July, 1973. In 1975 he received his last appraisal, which was unsatisfactory, by Mr. Logan who is classified as a technical inspector in aircraft mechanics/maintenance. This appraisal covered a nine-month period.