

Medicare

done to date. I find in volume I of the Hall Commission report on health services, page 6, these paragraphs:

The enjoyment of the highest attainable standards of health is one of the fundamental rights of every human being without distinction of race, religion, political belief, economic or social condition.

The health of all peoples is fundamental to the attainment of peace and security and is dependent upon the fullest co-operation of individuals and states.

There is no question that it is economic insecurity which raises the risk of war in a good many parts of the world at this time. Therefore, because I have believed in the need for a national health services plan since I returned from the first world war and have advocated it on all occasions whether I was a member of the Liberal party, the C.C.F. party or the New Democratic Party. I have no hesitation in supporting the second reading of this bill. I shall look forward to its implementation soon and, as a result of experience, its improvement and amendment.

• (5:50 p.m.)

PROCEEDINGS ON ADJOURNMENT MOTION

SUBJECT MATTER OF QUESTIONS TO BE DEBATED

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Order. It is my duty, pursuant to provisional standing order 39A, to inform the house that the questions to be raised at the time of adjournment tonight are as follows: The hon. member for Danforth (Mr. Scott), Public Service—representations respecting salaries of postal workers; the hon. member for Sherbrooke (Mr. Allard), Historical Monuments—Sherbrooke, Que.—demolition of Sir Alexander Galt's house; the hon. member for New Westminster (Mr. Mather), Old Age Security—continuation of payments to dependants of deceased pensioners.

HEALTH AND WELFARE

MEDICARE—AUTHORIZATION OF CONTRIBUTIONS TOWARD COST OF INSURED MEDICAL CARE

The house resumed consideration of the motion of Mr. MacEachen for the second reading of Bill C-227, to authorize the payment of contributions by Canada toward the cost of insured medical care services incurred by provinces pursuant to provincial medical care insurance plans, and the amendment thereto of Mr. Rynard.

Hon. Michael Starr (Ontario): Mr. Speaker, I wish to take part in this debate to express my position in respect of Bill C-227. I have lived for a number of years with the troubles and worries of Canadian workers and citizens brought about by the expense of illness and adversity. During the past years unions in this country have been able to raise the standard of living of industrial workers through collective bargaining. As a result these Canadian citizens enjoy a high and excellent standard of living. The unions have been able to negotiate the institution of medical plans which offset the worries of the average Canadian who now knows that in time of sickness his expenses will be covered. A great many people in this country have no protection in this regard and are unable to take care of themselves.

Bill C-227 does not in effect institute a universal medicare program in Canada. Medical health care is under provincial jurisdiction and four provinces now have medical plans which cover the people who are unable to provide for their own needs. The province of Manitoba is now in the process of devising a plan to cover these people in that province.

This bill will not institute a universal medical plan in Canada. By its very title one can see this. It states that it is:

An act to authorize the payment of contributions by Canada toward the cost of insured medical care services incurred by provinces pursuant to provincial medical care insurance plans.

All this bill does is ask parliament to authorize the government to set aside moneys to be paid to provinces, which now have or will institute medical schemes, to the extent of half of the cost of their medical schemes. The bill states as an objective that these plans shall be universal. That is a laudable objective. By the provisions of this bill payment will be made to those provinces which institute a program of medical care insurance. Some provinces may not do so, in which event this will not be a universal plan. As a matter of fact, it is doubtful that through the provisions of this bill all the costs incurred by provinces under their own medical schemes will be covered.

The Prime Minister (Mr. Pearson) has said time and time again throughout this country during election campaigns that he hoped by July 1, 1967, the centennial year of this great country, he would be able to provide a medicare program for all the people of Canada in commemoration of this event. However, since those promises we have heard sharper words