

Health and Welfare

medicine, does he not feel that this should be paid for by all of us rather than by imposing the extra cost of deterrent fees on the people who have to take advantage of these services?

Mr. Rynard: Mr. Speaker, provincial governments must have something to say about this matter. Health comes under the jurisdiction of the provinces, but we must not stint on research or education in any way because they are the most important things. Many other things flow from these activities. If we will have more doctors, and more research they can earn millions of dollars which could easily be used as a substitute for the deterrent fee about which the hon. member is talking. I hope that answers the hon. member's question.

Mr. Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre): The hon. member is moving in the right direction.

• (5:50 p.m.)

[*Translation*]

Mr. J. A. Mongrain (Trois-Rivières): Mr. Speaker, it is often said, with regard to the business of the house, that we abuse the right to speak and that often, we use it for trifles. Many newspapermen poke fun at the house, saying that the members are not always serious in their interventions. I doubt that that can be said this evening about the debate on the notice of motion moved by the member for Regina-Lake Centre (Mr. Benjamin).

I listened with great interest to the speech of the member for Algoma (Mr. Foster), a new-comer to the house, who speaks like a conscientious researcher and whose arguments are indeed very serious.

The intervention of the member for Simcoe North (Mr. Rynard), as usual, is that of a practitioner who, obviously, has far more reference material than the average member, and we always follow with special interest the statements he presents calmly, sedately, just as a university professor would. We will undeniably be the richer for this debate.

Unless I am mistaken, the notice of motion of the member for Regina-Lake Centre stems from a deep concern for the welfare of the Canadian people. The honourable member certainly deserves congratulations, although the house would not be justified in legislating on all good causes. I feel that the possibilities for legislation in this house are limited by certain circumstances such as, for instance, constitutional matters or barriers, if you wish.

I should like to spend a few minutes—briefly, I am sorry to say—even though I

[Mr. Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre).]

respect the fundamental concern in this notice of motion, in demonstrating that this notice of motion is superfluous and even ill-advised, since it would encroach upon provincial jurisdictions; this cannot be accepted, and it would even run counter to certain well-known attitudes of his party. In addition, it bears the stamp of an excessive rigidity, which I would call "legislomania", if I may use that expression.

This notice of motion is useless, Mr. Speaker, as far as the federal government is concerned, if it tends to protect its own interests. In fact, I feel that the interests of the federal government are already protected by law, since the federal government contributes 50 per cent of the cost. If the provinces collect something else on what the federal government pays them, of course that will not justify the federal government to pay more than its share. That is why from the point of view of the provinces and certainly that of the federal government, that notice of motion is useless surely.

It is untimely, as I said earlier, because it constitutes inadmissible interference in the provincial field. Mr. Speaker, I believe that independently of everything that can happen in any of the provinces, it is unacceptable—and I will admit that the hon. member for Regina-Lake Centre who told us about what is going on in Saskatchewan certainly impressed most of us—to go beyond the limits imposed on us by the provincial jurisdictions.

The Hospital Insurance and Diagnostic Services Act and the Medical Care Act were drafted and passed after consultation with the provinces. Provinces are responsible for the administration of these various acts, but I think that the federal government would be ill-advised to overlook the limits of its jurisdiction.

The member for Regina-Lake Centre spoke about the situation in his province. For my part, I know that in the province of Quebec, a general outcry would be raised if the federal government would become so meticulous that it would provide in its legislation all specific cases which might raise differences of opinions and differences in the needs of the various provinces. I think that we should emphasize what the member for Algoma said: In an immense country such as ours, conditions are not the same in all ten provinces, and a province may wish to give particular characteristics to the agreement entered upon with the federal government as, maybe, is the case in Saskatchewan.