

Oral Questions

total present capacity of hospital beds will be occupied by elderly people. In this context, I should like to ask the minister whether he could tell the House when his government will honour the electoral promise made last May 3, when he said he would immediately make an additional \$20 million subsidy for medical research in gerontology?

[English]

Hon. David Crombie (Minister of National Health and Welfare): Mr. Speaker, the statistics report published yesterday is, of course, as the hon. member has indicated. With respect to medical research—and I take it that that is the hon. member's question—there are now before cabinet provisions outlining opportunities for both an increase in the level and an extension of the five-year formula established by the previous government. I am hopeful that the result will be a positive one.

[Translation]

Miss Bégin: Mr. Speaker, I have a supplementary to the hon. minister.

I have a lot of trouble with this minister: either he does not know how to use the little earpiece for simultaneous translation—in fact, he plays the same trick with us in committee, where we have seen him use his earpiece the wrong way—or there really is a learning disability somewhere.

I would like to repeat my question: When will the government announce an additional \$20 million subsidy for gerontology, as the minister promised Canadians over six months ago now, what share of these moneys will go to practical research for health care aimed at elderly people and the training of specialized personnel, and what share will go to pure research? The minister has mentioned the Medical Research Council, and I do not know what it has to do with this question.

[English]

Mr. Crombie: Mr. Speaker, I think I heard it that time. The commitment that was made during the election campaign is one which we intend to keep. I had some discussion with the provincial ministers of health at the conference in September. We will be meeting again very shortly. As the hon. member knows, this is a matter of concern to me and I hope we will be able to resume discussions with the provinces on this matter in short order.

SOURCE OF FUNDS FOR GERONTOLOGY RESEARCH

Hon. John M. Reid (Kenora-Rainy River): Mr. Speaker, would the minister of health tell the House where the money will come from?

Hon. David Crombie (Minister of National Health and Welfare): Mr. Speaker, there are, of course, a number of places from which the money can come; but it will all come from the taxpayers of Canada. My view is that the taxpayers of Canada would support such allocations.

[Miss Bégin.]

LOTTERIES

CALL FOR INVESTIGATION INTO EFFECTS ON SOCIETY

Mr. Jim Fleming (York West): Mr. Speaker, I would like to address a question to the Secretary of State who is also the inner cabinet minister responsible for social policy. It deals with lotteries and the impact they have on the poor, the elderly and the ability of private sector charitable institutions to raise money, as well as the question of responsibility in advertising. I wrote to the minister last summer asking if he would push for an investigation. The minister responded by asking for my suggestions, and with a letter indicating that he would take the matter up with cabinet. That letter was dated September 19.

Has the minister taken up with cabinet the possibility of a full investigation into the effect of this \$2 billion business in the marketplace, and have his colleagues agreed to do something about this situation; or have they rejected this common concern which the minister and I share?

Hon. David MacDonald (Secretary of State and Minister of Communications): Mr. Speaker, the hon. member has pursued this matter for some time. I can recall that over the last couple of years he has raised this topic on repeated occasions. We have not had an opportunity to deal with the matter in cabinet because we are very much engaged in pursuing matters of priority which have been identified by the new government. I would hope that we can deal with this subject fairly soon, because it is important.

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[Translation]

TRANSPORT

INQUIRY WHETHER AGREEMENT REACHED TO RESERVE ONE LANE ON CHAMPLAIN BRIDGE, MONTREAL, FOR SOUTH SHORE BUSES

Mr. Pierre Deniger (Laprairie): Mr. Speaker, the question I am directing to the Minister of State for Transport deals with the Champlain Bridge and the lot of Montreal South Shore suburbanites. Could the minister indicate whether the new government intends to renew an agreement which our government signed in the past whereby a special lane would be reserved during peak hours for the buses of the transport commission in Montreal South Shore, an agreement which is to expire within the next few days and which has been an unqualified success?

[English]

Hon. J. Robert Howie (Minister of State, Transport): Mr. Speaker, I thank the hon. member for his question. The experimental project regarding the lane on Champlain Bridge reserved for buses has been in operation for 18 months and expires the last day of this month. The ministry of transport of Quebec has attempted to do an evaluation of the project, but they have been hindered by labour problems.