

Supply—Health and Welfare

in the city of London or the county of Middlesex, I should say, that does not get the rebate of the sales tax is the Bethesda hospital operated by the Salvation Army.

I have had some correspondence about it, and there are some technicalities, I agree, that have not been worked out. But when we realize that the fees charged by Victoria hospital and St. Joseph's hospital, for instance, as compared with Bethesda are considerably higher—and I use these two hospitals as an example—and that they are in receipt of grants that Bethesda hospital is not, and yet Bethesda hospital provides hospital care at a comparatively reasonable rate, it is not right. The class of people who go to Bethesda hospital are not able financially to go to these other hospitals I have mentioned. It is doing a great charitable work for a segment of the population that needs it, and consequently I would think it would not be too difficult to work out some plan to aid the hospital.

I hold in my hand a letter from the minister's department, dated June 22 of this year, pointing out that section 105A of the Excise Tax Act—

Mr. Martin: The matter should be discussed with the Department of National Revenue.

Mr. White (Middlesex East): I took it up with that department and was told that I should take it up with the minister. I am taking it up with the minister, and he can take it up with the other department. I shall read the letter from the minister's department. It reads in part as follows:

This section applies in respect of an institution that is certified by the Minister of National Health and Welfare in accordance with regulations of the governor in council to be

(a) a bona fide public institution whose principal purpose is to provide permanent or semi-permanent shelter and care for children or aged, infirm or incapacitated persons who reside in the institution; and

(b) in receipt annually of aid from the government of Canada or a province for the maintenance of persons specified in paragraph (a).

Further on the letter says:

A review of records in this office has been made in order to determine whether there is any possibility of the hospital qualifying as a bona fide public institution. I have learned, however, that when an application was received from the Bethesda hospital some years ago it was found that the duration of care provided was a barrier to its certification.

In the John Dearnness home they are there for years and years; in the Middlesex County home they are there for years and years. Therefore time is not the element. In Victoria hospital, the St. Joseph's hospital, and other hospitals of that nature the patients may be there for only a day or two weeks.

They get the rebate. In other places where they are there for years, they get the rebate. Time seems to be the element so far as Bethesda is concerned. I do not think that is right. The letter continues:

This, to our way of thinking, is more in the nature of temporary care rather than semi-permanent or permanent care as required by the act.

It is only necessary to change the regulations a little and Bethesda could comply with them.

Mr. Martin: I shall see that this is brought to the attention of the Minister of National Revenue.

Mr. White (Middlesex East): I feel that Bethesda hospital should have a refund of the sales tax. There is no question in the world but that the Salvation Army hospital in the city of London is doing a great work for a class of people that need it.

I have one other small matter that I want to bring to the attention of the minister. It is a contentious question in many municipalities. I refer to the fluoridation of water. We all realize that there are probably cranks on both sides, but I do think the people of Canada would be glad to know definitely from the department just what is the answer. I think they have every confidence in any information the Department of National Health and Welfare puts out.

I took it upon myself to inquire from one of the former city engineers of the city of London. The Engineering Institute of Canada, London, Ontario, branch, held a meeting on April 26 last, and that was the subject that was dealt with. There was quite a panel of people there, interested citizens and doctors, and many questions were asked. I am not going into all the details, but there were arguments pro and con on the subject. The amazing thing to me is that not 1 per cent of the water that is treated in any municipality actually gets to the people for whom it is destined. In other words, after the water is treated with fluorides you wash your car and your dishes with it. Less than 1 per cent of the water gets to the child who it is claimed is going to benefit from it so far as his teeth are concerned. I understand that we obtain fluorine from natural foods such as milk, eggs, butter, cheese, chicken livers, etc., while the synthetic fluorines are a by-product of the aluminum industry. Without going into details, there are two paragraphs in this report of the meeting held in London which I should like to quote. Mr. W. M. Veitch, the engineer of the city of London, put the following inquiry to the meeting:

The whole question is puzzling to me. We do not seem to get answers to our inquiries and if we pursue them, we are "cranks". There are, of