

*Supply—Labour*

instance of the florist shop to show that girls will work in an industry which gives them the most attractive working conditions which covers both pay and hours.

Now, we come to nursing in veterans hospitals. Two years ago the federal cabinet approved a shift differential for nurses in veterans hospitals. I was overjoyed at the progressive step which was taken by the cabinet and the Department of Veterans Affairs and on two occasions in this house I congratulated the present Minister of Veterans Affairs for his foresight in introducing shift differential rates of pay for nurses in veterans hospitals. I am sorry to say it took me about one year to learn what kind of treatment the federal cabinet was handing the nurses in veterans hospitals on shift differentials. I protested about this in the past and I protest now.

Shift differentials are an established method of payment for labour throughout the Dominion of Canada. Why it took so long to introduce shift differentials into the Department of Veterans Affairs hospitals I do not know—but it took years.

Now that we have the shift differentials it is ridiculous that the federal government pays only 8 cents an hour on the evening shift and 12 cents an hour on the night shift. These differentials are miserly, low and inadequate. They would never attract any nurses to a veterans hospital.

They have shift differentials in the province of Quebec and shift differentials in the province of Saskatchewan, and they are much higher than the Canadian government's. But the federal government pays only an 8 cents an hour shift differential for the evening shift and a 12 cents an hour differential on the night shift.

● (4:20 p.m.)

I wish to draw to the minister's attention the ridiculous situation which exists, because the Department of Veterans Affairs does not pay the evening shift differential on the eight hours work for the evening nor the night shift differential for the eight hours spent on the night shift. The federal government pays an additional eight cents an hour on the evening shift only from 6 p.m. to midnight, arguing that the time from four in the afternoon to 6 p.m. is part of day working hours and that the employee is therefore only entitled to day rates during that period. Then with regard to the night shift, the federal government says the nurses are working night hours only until 6 a.m.—the two hours after

that are day hours and the differential should be paid only in respect of the hours from midnight to 6 a.m.

I have been in business, Mr. Chairman, for more than 40 years. At one time we had as many as 17 unions in the organization with which I was connected. I had never heard of any employer who split the hours of a shift into day hours or evening hours, or night hours and day hours until the Department of Veterans Affairs came out with this pitiful scheme when it introduced shift differentials into nurses pay for the first time.

I made many inquiries of unions and labour leaders and none could tell me of any case where shift differentials were being paid by the hour rather than by whole shifts. I am sorry to say that in Britain, when I was there this past July with the veterans affairs committee, I ascertained that the British government pays the nurses employed in the hospitals of Britain on the same basis. I was disturbed to find a labour government in Britain approving a system whereby the hours of a shift are divided into day or evening hours, or night and day hours so that the differential rate would not apply to the complete eight hours of labour. I call upon the Minister of Labour of Canada, now that we are considering his estimates, to see that the shift differential is paid for the full eight hours of employment on each shift as is done in all other industries. It is a low enough shift differential to start with, but I maintain it should be paid for the full eight hours.

In Britain, though, I came up with one discovery which pleased me immensely. I ascertained that for about two years they have been paying a day premium rate of pay on Sundays in the hospitals of Britain. They pay one pound more on Sundays than on other days of the week. By paying this premium rate, they are able to attract for weekend employment persons who do not work in the nursing profession during the other days of the week but who are prepared to go back on Sundays for this extra pound which is known in labour circles as a day premium rate.

We shall never overcome the shortage of nurses until we offer rates of pay in the nursing profession which are sufficient to attract girls from other professions. Why would any girl choose to work at nursing on Saturdays, Sundays and holidays if she is to receive no more than she would earn as a stenographer working from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., five days a week? We all admit that man's work is from sun to sun and it is not right to