

Inquiries of the Ministry

the provinces will come under the plan by July 1, 1968. Do I take it from the minister's reply that the federal government intends to adhere to the original proposition that the administration of the plan must come under a public body appointed by the provincial government?

Mr. MacEachen: Yes, Mr. Speaker. There is no change in that policy. There must be a provincial authority administering a public plan, and the roles of other agencies, such as private insurance carriers and plans sponsored by doctors, are laid down in the bill itself. There has been no change from that point of view.

[Translation]

Mr. Maurice Allard (Sherbrooke): Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the hon. Minister of National Health and Welfare (Mr. MacEachen) concerning the recent federal-provincial meeting on health.

Can the hon. minister tell the house whether it has been determined that the provinces will be the ones to decide what further health services will be admissible to federal subsidies?

[English]

Mr. MacEachen: The method of adding further health services to the health plan has been set out in the bill. The attitude the government of Canada took at the conference was that when a consensus developed amongst the provinces as to the importance of further services, the government would consider adding those services to the plan. We have made no decision as to further services at the present time except the statement that has been made with respect to services provided by dental or oral surgeons.

[Translation]

Mr. Allard: I have a supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. At that federal-provincial meeting, was there any discussion about giving fiscal compensation to provinces not coming under the federal medical care insurance plan?

Mr. Speaker: Order. Does the hon. member not think that the question he has just put launches us in a debate and that, for this reason, it should not be allowed?

Mr. Allard: I do not, Mr. Speaker, because this question proceeds from the previous one.

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[English]

Mr. Douglas: A supplementary question, Mr. Speaker. May I ask the Minister of National Health and Welfare whether he has had any requests from any of the provinces for an extension of services other than those which the government initially stipulated for the medicare program?

Mr. Speaker: Order. I am very much afraid that the question asked by the hon. member is substantially the same as that asked by the hon. member for Sherbrooke.

[Later:]

Mr. Stanley Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre): Mr. Speaker, may I direct a question to the Minister of National Health and Welfare. In the light of discussions at the conference of health ministers during the past two days, is the government considering the possibility of advancing the effective date of medicare, as provided for under the Medical Care Act.

Mr. MacEachen: Mr. Speaker, this matter was raised at the conference but there was no request or disposition by any province to advance the date of medicare implementation. Accordingly the position of the federal government is unchanged. The starting date will be July 1, 1968, as provided for in the bill.

Mr. Donald MacInnis (Cape Breton South): A supplementary question. The minister said that there would be no advancement of the date from July 1, 1968. When pushing the legislation through the house he said the bill might be implemented on or before July 1, 1968. I ask the minister what happened to that "before".

Mr. MacEachen: That has already been answered.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please.

Mr. Knowles: It was just window dressing.

[Translation]

LABOUR CONDITIONS

QUEBEC—REASON FOR HIGH RATE OF UNEMPLOYMENT

On the orders of the day:

Mr. Réal Caouette (Villeneuve): Mr. Speaker, I should like to direct a question to the hon. Minister of Manpower and Immigration.

Since the minister has probably studied in detail the unemployment situation in Canada;