

recognize that the minister's position is a difficult one. Nevertheless, I think we must agree that we must go further than the provinces in providing medical care to Canadians. To give an illustration, the province of British Columbia includes the services of chiropractors under its medical care program. In the province of Alberta, other health care is included in the program of that province. In the province of Ontario, we find that the services of podiatrists are paid for under the Workmen's Compensation Board. Surely, this points out the great discrepancy which exists among the provinces. I can appreciate the difficulty of bringing all those points of view together. We, in the committee, must come to some decision because the Hall commission report includes within medical services the services of dentists, optometrists, prescribed drugs, prosthetic services, home care, dental and oral surgery, physiotherapy, podiatric treatment and surgery, and chiropractic treatment.

It seems to me that we must keep in tune with most of the provinces in Canada, and to do this we should provide more services than are included under the provisions of this bill.

As I have said to the minister, I can appreciate his difficulties. I hope I have pointed out the great variation which exists in the services covered under various provincial plans, and the fact that a great many of these services are paid for by co-operative insurance plans. Surely, we in the house should set an example to the provinces and keep up with the thinking of the foremost provinces in the Dominion.

Mr. Starr: Mr. Chairman, I have not participated in this debate but I have followed it intently. I find that the committee has reached an impasse as far as medical care services are concerned. The minister has his own reasons for not wishing to change the provisions of the bill. Amendments have been submitted and ruled out of order. I think that some way must be found whereby the government may be free to negotiate with the provinces regarding the inclusion under the medical care program of other health services. There might be provinces which do not wish to include certain medical services provided under the bill. In view of this, I wonder whether an amendment which I wish to submit will be acceptable to the government. Unfortunately, I have not made copies of it nor did I have an opportunity to have it translated into French but I will submit the following amendment

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for the consideration of the minister and the committee. It reads as follows:

Delete all words after the word "person" in line 5 and substitute the following:

"who by agreement between any participating province and the federal government is accepted as a person entitled to practise medicine for the purposes of this act".

This amendment does not commit the government to any further expenditure except by agreement between the provinces and the federal government. It seems to me that such an agreement is necessary prior to the enactment of the bill. Surely, a conference must be held so that an agreement may be reached whereby the participating provinces may alter or change their plans in accordance with the bill before us which would make them eligible for federal financial participation in their programs.

I so move, seconded by the hon. member for Simcoe East.

● (4:50 p.m.)

The Deputy Chairman: The hon. member for Ontario has proposed the following amendment:

Delete all words after the word "person" in line 5 and substitute the following:

"who by agreement between any participating province and the federal government is accepted as a person entitled to practise medicine for the purposes of this act".

Mr. Starr: Instead of the word "medicine", it should read "medical care services", if you would correct that.

Mr. Lewis: Mr. Chairman, I am not sure whether the precise wording proposed by the hon. member for Ontario fits the language of the clause, and I do not know how the minister intends to treat the proposed amendment, but may I rise to support it and to urge the minister to give consideration to the amendment? It seems to me that it is not open to the objections raised to the previous amendments on the part of the minister and confirmed by the Chair. It is merely a different definition rather than an expansion of the services and would at least give the minister a little flexibility in the case of each particular agreement with each particular province.

It does not accomplish, Mr. Chairman, what most of us had hoped might be accomplished, and that is to persuade the minister to give himself sufficient room to expand the services as the provinces one by one decide to expand them. It does not accomplish that purpose and I do not intend to go back to that part of the discussion, but it does seem to me to make a