

Medical Care Act

locks them up, and puts them in solitary confinement when they do not conform. They are not exposed to treatment. I suppose shortly we will hang them. No attention is being paid to that area. It is easier to bring in this kind of a bill and say let the provinces sink or swim.

There certainly ought to be convalescent centres. It costs Canadian taxpayers as much as \$200 per day to maintain a chronic case patient in an active treatment hospital. It would be cheaper to put that person in the Carleton Towers at \$30 or \$40 a day. There would be a saving to the Canadian taxpayer. But we do not do that. We say the funds are not available.

Those who are the poorest in this country can never get into convalescent centres. Therefore we have these chronic care patients in active treatment beds, at great expense to the taxpayers.

The use of paramedics would reduce the reliance on doctors. In many of the northern parts of my constituency we could certainly use paramedics. We would not have to transport a patient to an active care hospital at great expense to treat him. No work has been done in the area of paramedics, but it would certainly cut down on the cost of using doctors.

We have not done anything in the area of cottage hospitals where minor surgery is done, with the patient staying in his own community where he can be cared for by his family. Much minor surgery could certainly be carried out in a cottage hospital; such a system has worked well in other parts of the world.

● (2150)

Again, we provide no dental care programs for children across Canada through which dental problems could be identified and corrected early. If such programs were put into effect, medical costs generally could be reduced. In poorer provinces which cannot afford to support such programs on their own, such childhood complaints are left unattended until eventually they prove very costly. But the government ignores reasonable solutions. Take the oil situation, for example. It thinks it can crank up the price and thus cause people to use less. This seems to be a Liberal approach—if you can make the cost of a commodity or service prohibitive the demand for it will be reduced. But who are the ones who suffer? Who are the people which the government seems to want to punish? In this case it is the users of the health service.

Where else could the government cut the costs of health services? There is one obvious way, but it is hard to expect a Liberal government, or indeed a Tory government for that matter, to act along these lines. In Ottawa the majority of lung-related diseases are due to smoking. In my riding, the majority of lung-related diseases are due to living near the smokestacks of INCO and Falconbridge. And the first thing that happens, whenever corporate profits look as though they might just possibly be dipping, the first thing to be curtailed is expenditure on anti-pollution equipment. That is the first thing to go out. There is one nice thing, though.

The International Nickel Company is acting on this matter, and it gives me pleasure to say that in my riding it has now raised its smokestack 1,200 feet into the air. As a result, I understand the sulphur fumes coming out of that

stack lately are falling here in Ottawa. I am happy about that. I hope these fumes will invade the brains of members opposite. I bet you dollars to dimes you will see them taking action fast because they will be receiving the benefits of that pollution.

An hon. Member: It got to you.

Mr. Rodriguez: I see I have touched a tender spot in the sensitivity of members over there.

There might be something else the government could do in its own backyard affecting its own employees. Perhaps it could become a model employer. In the public service in 1974-75 there were 22,218 accidents costing directly more than \$7 million. Out of the figure I have mentioned, more than 10,000 people were injured in the department of that friend of labour, the Postmaster General (Mr. Mackasey). Almost 7,000 of those injuries were disabling, and the total cost was \$3.5 million. That doesn't include the health costs, but I have a feeling a lot more money could be saved in that area if the government really cared to save money by starting up an industrial safety program among its own employees.

There is another question which arises when I consider a proposal such as we have before us. We look around the country, Mr. Speaker, and we are amazed at our priorities. We marvel. It is interesting to note that the country can find the resources to build a one billion dollar Olympic set-up. To do what? We can spend \$100 million to secure 1,500 athletes for two weeks. We can do this without batting an eyelid, for the sake of somebody's ego tripping. I do not understand the mentality of Liberals. It is quite clear they have a false sense of values. I realize that this touches a sensitive issue.

An hon. Member: You voted for the Olympics.

Mr. Rodriguez: We did not. If the hon. member for St. Catharines (Mr. Parent) wishes to make a speech I will certainly yield the floor to him.

An hon. Member: He is good at interrupting.

Mr. Rodriguez: He is good at interrupting, not at speaking. He had better go and take a poll among his constituents.

Where are our priorities? We can find dollars to put on a fantastic Olympic spectacle, and no doubt we shall be paying for it by having an Olympic lottery for the next hundred years. But we cannot find the money to provide health care services.

Mr. MacFarlane: That's not true.

Mr. Rodriguez: Where are we going to find it? We shall all have to find it.

Mr. MacFarlane: Because you shout louder does not make it true.

Mr. Rodriguez: They say preparations for the Olympics are moving ahead on schedule, moving toward an improvement in the muscles of a very small group of Canadians. But sometimes I wonder about our mental health. When we pick up the papers today it seems to me we are con-