

inces, but rather the role of the federal government should be to support medical insurance plans established by the provinces. The federal government should not attempt to dictate to the provinces the precise terms of their plans.

● (5:00 p.m.)

It should, therefore, be up to the provinces to determine the extent of the coverage, including especially the question of whether paramedical services, such as performed by optometrists, psychologists, chiropractors and other services be included. Any plan to which the federal government contributes should preserve the voluntary doctor-patient relationship.

Accordingly, Her Majesty's Loyal Opposition intends to move, at the appropriate stages in the committee discussion, a series of amendments to the bill which would carry into effect the principles I have outlined. This will involve the following amendments: An amendment to clause 2 (f) to ensure that paramedical services carried out by qualified personnel who are authorized by the provinces to render services in such fields as dental oral surgery, optometry, which has been forgotten entirely, psychology, physiotherapy and other related fields, will be covered if they are included in a provincial medical insurance plan. This will be done by redefining the meaning of "medical practitioner".

By amending clause 4 (1) (a) we will provide that, in order to qualify a provincial plan need not be operated by a public authority, but may be operated by any authority approved or designated by the government of the province, which will preserve the principle of the right of the province to determine how it wants medical insurance within its borders to be administered. By deleting subparagraph (c) of subclause (1) of clause 4, the province would be permitted to determine the extent of the coverage within its own borders. Surely, this is a matter to be settled primarily between the provincial governments and their electors. By deleting subparagraph (b) of subclause (4) of clause 5, we would eliminate the paragraph which prevents any federal contribution towards the cost of administration of a provincial plan. It goes without saying that no plan of medical insurance, any more than any other governmental plan, can be administered without cost. We insist upon the principle that the provinces have the primary right to determine the medical insurance plan best suited to their needs and the needs of their people. Surely, this can be worked out in consultation with the provinces.

Medicare

The costs of administration are as much a cost of the plan as are the payments to the practitioners. We, therefore, propose to delete the paragraph which precludes any contribution to administrative costs.

By these amendments, we propose to bring the bill into line with acceptable principles upon which to found a federal contribution to the cost of prepaid medical care. If they are accepted, we feel that they would enable all parties and all members of the house to support a bill carrying into effect this measure so important to the welfare of the Canadian people. If the amendments importing these principles into the bill are enacted, I believe we will have produced a measure which will establish the basis upon which, in the very near future, the common objective of us all can be achieved, namely, that medical services, at an adequate level, should be available to all Canadians on a prepaid basis. I do urge the government to accept the amendments and thus make it possible for all of us to support the bill in its later stages. Unless this is done, there will be very real doubt as to whether such support is possible or should be forthcoming.

Accordingly, I move this amendment, seconded by the hon. member for Kamloops. I also move an amendment to—

The Deputy Chairman: Order. I think the hon. member for Simcoe East should wait until the committee reaches the clause to which he intends to move an amendment.

Mr. Fulton: Mr. Chairman, perhaps the hon. member could give notice of his intention to move this amendment.

Mr. Rynard: I give notice of my intention to move the following amendment:

Clause 2 of Bill C-227 is amended by deleting paragraph (f) thereof and substituting therefor the following:

(f) "medical practitioner" for the purposes of this act means any person lawfully engaged in the practice of rendering services to individuals in the field of the healing arts whose qualifications and entitlement to practice in the place in which such practice is carried on by him are recognized by the government of a province or by an association approved for the purpose by the legislature of a province;

Mr. Knowles: Mr. Chairman, I wonder whether I might raise a procedural point at this juncture. I have listened carefully to the remarks made by the hon. member for Simcoe East. I think he has made it clear that either he or his colleagues have a number of amendments to move. The first one they wish to