

*Medicare*

● (4:30 p.m.)

On that basis, bearing in mind the definition of the Concise Oxford dictionary as it relates to those medical care plans already in existence in at least three of the provinces, this line of argument seems to be completely in agreement with the line of argument advanced by the hon. member for Hamilton South (Mr. Howe) and the hon. member for Simcoe East (Mr. Rynard).

In addition, may I just point out to Your Honour again that the Department of National Revenue gives a clear-cut definition of this term in the guidance instructions provided for T-1 short income tax forms. That has already been referred to by me and others including the hon. member for Kamloops (Mr. Fulton). It ought to be a very important precedent in your reconsideration of the ruling Your Honour has made declaring this and previous amendments our of order.

I mention these things again because I believe the arguments presented on this point are basically important to the rulings which were made, particularly in view of what I understand is the attempt behind the amendment to which we are referring.

There is one other point I want to bring to your attention. It concerns the right of members to move amendments to legislation proposed by the government. Bill C-227 would authorize the payment of contributions by Canada towards the cost of insured medical care services incurred by provinces pursuant to provincial medical care insurance plans.

The resolution passed by this house in effect gave general approval of the bill that was to follow. By granting second reading, which I did not support, this house gave approval to the principle of the bill. What the minister has said to us in the arguments he presented, and what I believe is involved in the ruling that has been made, is that by giving approval on second reading of a bill we are denying ourselves the right to make amendments when we reach the committee stage. I am concerned about that because approval of the principles of a bill on second reading certainly does not mean approval of all the details within the bill itself.

Surely approval on second reading should not interfere with the right of this house to move amendments to a bill. The minister has said that by accepting such an amendment we would be authorizing extra expenditures and that is not a right of the opposition in this house. I suggest that statement is open to question and that this has already been

brought out during the debate in relation to whether or not these amendments are in order. I seriously question whether or not it would cost more to have an optometrist take care of the necessary refractions to the eyes of a patient than it would if the patient went to an ophthalmologist for the same service. Certainly, that same argument applies to certain muscular and spine conditions which could be looked after by a chiropractor. I am not convinced by any means that it would cost more for a chiropractor to take care of this kind of condition than it would for a medical doctor practising in the field of manipulative medicine to take care of the same condition. The same argument applies in the area of oral and dental surgery. The suggestion that widening the scope of the definition of "medical practitioner" or of "medical services" is going to incur an extra cost to the treasury is something that cannot be accepted as true.

If such a suggestion is true and if we accept it on that basis, then practically every amendment proposed by members of this house would be out of order because it would change the amount of money involved. This is a very critical and important point inasmuch as it relates to the rights of parliament and the rights of hon. members on this side of the house. If that is the case, then the arguments we have heard with regard to the second reading of the defence bill are invalid, because after second reading we would not be permitted to amend that bill on the pretense or excuse that amendments might involve the expenditure of money. By adopting this principle, we are weakening the rights of members in this house.

The other day a question was asked in this house as to the colour of the new uniform. Supposing an amendment were moved to change the colour recommended in the defence bill, who knows but what the dye for that colour would cost more or less than the dye for the colour proposed by the bill?

**Mr. Knowles:** In other words, the die is cast.

**Mr. Thompson:** I agree with the hon. member, in other words the die is cast, and that die is simply a method by which we are now taking away the rights of this house. We are depriving ourselves of certain basic rights as members of the opposition to move amendments to legislation brought down by the government. If we accept that proposition, we might just as well forget about any useful purpose we have here except to talk in the