

*Health and Welfare*

today is due to the large number of people who seek admission to hospitals just to have a check-up.

Some people spend four or five days in hospitals at government expense to sober up after overindulging in drink. Hospitals have become luxury hotels. This situation should be controlled more efficiently. Although a receipt is handed out on discharge from hospitals, it is mentioned at no time that half the bill is paid by the federal government. Ordinary medical examinations should not be made in hospitals. This would result in decreasing the cost of hospital insurance and would allow a better use of beds. This should not be permitted in the province of Quebec, as these services are free of charge. I do not know what the cost is to the province, but the federal government is contributing a certain amount.

I have made these comments hoping to correct this situation, but 20 minutes is too short a time to say everything I want. Anyway, Mr. Speaker, I could say enough to fill a whole encyclopaedia.

It was said by previous speakers that the government was quite agreeable to the principle of integrating psychiatric hospitals, but as I said previously, it is preferable to concentrate on urgent matters, since psychiatric and tuberculosis cases have decreased to such an extent that it is hardly worthwhile spending too much time on this problem.

I was saying a while ago that medical care is a complement and I wish that some pressure were exerted on the authorities concerned to have this program established in all the provinces.

People always say that medical care is expensive, that doctors charge high fees. As far as I am concerned, I have always had the confidence of those who trusted me. Doctors are given to the people by the Lord to provide them with good care. I hope everyone will appreciate their work, because they are human beings like anybody else, and they understand the needs of people.

I agree with my hon. friend from Winnipeg North who has been sponsoring this bill for several years. I hope that one day he will succeed in getting what he wants; but then, I am afraid it will be too late.

• (5:30 p.m.)

At any rate, I must declare now that the government cannot accept to amend the Hospital Insurance and Diagnostic Services Act so as to be obliged to provide assistance to

[Mr. Isabelle.]

the health establishments mentioned in the motion proposed by my colleague from Winnipeg North.

**Mr. Gilbert Rondeau (Shefford):** Mr. Speaker, as regards the notice of motion presented by the hon. member for Winnipeg North, there are two things to point out and that can be dealt with at the same time.

First, the advisability of including mental hospitals and T.B. sanatoria in the federal hospital insurance program. The second point consists in making available to provinces sufficient funds to provide for adequate treatment of the mentally ill, of people suffering from T.B. and the care and training of mentally retarded children.

I believe all the hon. members agree with that, as they must on many occasions have encountered problems concerning mentally retarded people or patients who could not be admitted to mental hospitals or T.B. sanatoria, because of the lack of room there.

The purpose of this motion is to have such mental hospitals and T.B. sanatoria covered by the federal hospital insurance program. The remark I could make is that we are talking of capital expenditures i.e. that we want to include existing hospitals in medicare. But as far as capital expenditures are concerned, we know that today our hospitals, in Quebec as elsewhere, are costing us a fortune, and that it is their financing which is especially costly to the public. The federal government should intervene in this field, in order to allow the provinces to have psychiatric hospitals and a few sanatoria, the latter being less needed now that T.B. is regressing due to the progress of medical science. On the other hand, we can see that if T.B. is regressing, the number of mental patients is on the increase. And I found a little strange that the member for Hull (Mr. Isabelle) was only looking to the left when he mentioned mental patients. Mr. Speaker, today I wish to suggest that the federal government grant subsidies to the provinces for the construction of psychiatric hospitals or others, according to the formula put forward by Creditists, which would benefit to the provinces, since it would allow them to have the taxpayer pay only once the cost of their hospitals.

I remember seeing statistics that showed that the cost of hospitals built in Quebec or elsewhere had been paid at least three times, either in financing loans, or in bank or bond interests. I find it strange to force the people of the provinces, taxpayers, to pay three or