CRTC that it intends to go ahead with a new 911 emergency calls service. This service will be a slightly improved version of the former emergency calls system. However, the new service will be far more expensive.

For instance, for the Montreal Urban Community, the cost per line per month would be 47 cents, including taxes, instead of the present rate of 9 cents. This 500 per cent increase would mean an additional expense of $5 million for the MUC alone.

In Quebec, the new rates would be at least 35 per cent higher than those in Ontario, while a dedicated emergency calls service would exist only in Ontario. My question is this: does cost-effective federalism mean a 500 per cent increase for taxpayers in the Montreal area, rates that are 35 per cent higher in Quebec than in Ontario, not to mention the services which will be unavailable to us?

[*English*]

Hon. Perrin Beatty (Minister of Communications): Madam Speaker, as the hon. member is well aware, as he indicated himself, the proposals that were made by Bell Canada were made to the CRTC. It is the CRTC which has the responsibility of doing that.

For him to suggest that there is somehow an unfairness here and for him to try to feed on fears of interprovincial rivalry of one sort or another is very unfair. He should be well aware of the fact that at the present time there is a significant subsidy going the other way across the border between Ontario and Quebec. For him to suggest that somehow Quebecers would be better served by breaking up Confederation, he certainly misleads Quebecers in suggesting anything of the sort.

* * *

HEALTH

Mr. J. W. Bud Bird (Fredericton—York—Sunbury): Madam Speaker, I have a question for the Minister of National Health and Welfare or his parliamentary secretary.

The provincial government in New Brunswick has recently introduced a new provision with respect to medicare services when citizens are outside of Canada for more than 90 days. After that time, medicare payments will not be applicable for services obtained outside the country. Citizens have been advised to take out private health insurance coverage for such contingencies.

As well, the New Brunswick government has reminded residents that medicare coverage could lapse for citizens who are outside the province or the country for more than 182 days.

My question is whether or not the principle of modification of medicare coverage touching on absence from the province as I have just expressed is consistent with extra billing and user fees as have been previously found inconsistent with the Canada Health Act? Are these provisions with respect to temporary absence legitimate under the health act?

Madam Deputy Speaker: I think the question has been put. We are getting into a speech. The hon. parliamentary secretary.

Mrs. Barbara Sparrow (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of National Health and Welfare): Madam Speaker, the Canada Health Care Act requires each province to insure its residents for necessary health services.

It also has five criteria that are set down. When you are dealing with the authority of residency within a province, each province has the jurisdiction within that area. Some provinces have six months but I do see that New Brunswick, Quebec and Ontario are looking at three-month periods and that is within their jurisdiction. Do not conflict that with user fees.

* * *

• (1505)

PRIVILEGE

SUBCOMMITTEE ON HEALTH ISSUES—SPEAKER'S RULING

Madam Deputy Speaker: I am now prepared to rule on a question of privilege relating to the alleged premature disclosure to the media of the sixth report of the Standing Committee on Health and Welfare, Social Affairs, Seniors and the Status of Women, a report concerning the blood transfusion system in Canada.

I will first attempt to summarize the events which have led to today's ruling. On Tuesday, May 25, the hon. member for Delta, who also chairs the subcommittee on health issues, raised a question of privilege concerning the apparent leak of his subcommittee's draft report. The hon. member for Delta expressed his concern about the report's effect being damaged by a premature re-