

Medicare

Mr. MacEachen: I do not want to speak for the provinces but I would think that in imposing this stipulation we are making life much easier for them. At any rate we are doing this because we think the administration ought to be public in view of the great amounts of public money involved.

Mr. Forrestall: No one is objecting to that.

Mr. MacEachen: That is what we are saying. The provincial legislature, presumably on the recommendation of the provincial government, will designate a body as the provincial authority. That is their business. I was asked whether there was a role for physician-sponsored plans. In my judgment, and after careful consideration of the legal situation, the answer must be yes.

Mr. MacLean (Queens): The minister says he has been advised that doctor-sponsored non-profit organizations can legally operate in this field if approved or designated by the provincial authority as an agency. Will the minister say that it is the intention of the government that this should be so? In other words, was it the intention when the bill was drafted that these organizations of which we are speaking would be allowed to continue to function if it were the wish of the authority of the province that they should do so?

Mr. MacEachen: Yes, I think we tried to produce a bill which would make it possible for provinces wishing to do so to use an organization such as a physician-sponsored plan. This could be done in a limited way under subclause 2 of clause 4. But for the full range, in other words, a role as great in a sense as the role of the provincial authority, it would have to be part of the provincial authority that is under 4(1) (a).

Mr. Rynard: We realize the difficulty with which the minister has to contend. In view of the very strong liking we on this side of the house have for him and since he has met us half way and in the interest of getting along with this bill, I will withdraw the amendment.

● (4:00 p.m.)

The Chairman: Is the committee ready for the question?

Some hon. Members: Agreed.

Mr. MacEachen: Do I understand correctly that the hon. member wishes to withdraw his amendment?

Mr. Rynard: Yes.

[Mr. Forrestall.]

Mr. MacEachen: We consent to his request to withdraw.

Mr. Knowles: We also consent.

The Chairman: Does the hon. member have leave of the committee to withdraw his amendment?

Some hon. Members: Agreed.
Amendment withdrawn.

The Chairman: Does that complete the discussion of paragraph (a) of clause 4?

Some hon. Members: Agreed.

The Chairman: We will now consider paragraph (b) of clause 4.

On paragraph (b)—

Mr. Forrestall: Mr. Chairman, I am not sure that I should be moving this amendment during our consideration of paragraph (b) because so far as the amendment relates to that paragraph it is not substantive. We simply wish to remove the semicolon at the end of the paragraph and insert the word "and". Perhaps I should go ahead and move the amendment so that it will become apparent to the committee what we intend. I move:

That subclause 1 of clause 4 of Bill C-227 be amended as follows:

"By inserting the word 'and' after the semicolon at the end of paragraph (b); by deleting paragraph (c), and by renumbering paragraph (d) as paragraph (c)."

The Chairman: In view of the fact that this amendment relates to paragraph (c) and the renumbering of certain paragraphs, I suggest that we conclude our discussion on paragraph (b) before proceeding with the amendment.

Mr. Forrestall: I accept your advice to the effect that we defer any reference to renumbering until we get to paragraph (c). Perhaps I should simply ask that paragraph (b) be amended by removing the semicolon at the end and by inserting the word "and".

The Chairman: I suggest to the hon. member that he withhold his amendment until we complete our discussion of paragraph (b).

Mr. Forrestall: I am sorry, Mr. Chairman, I fail to understand your advice fully.

The Chairman: I am suggesting to the hon. member for Halifax that since his amendment relates to paragraphs (c) and (d) we complete our discussion on paragraph (b) and then permit him to move his amendment.