

Special War Revenue Act

attacks the muscles of young children. They are quickly converted into wheel-chair patients; they soon become bed patients and finally pass away.

This treatment or medicine, glycine, was originally controlled by one concern in the United States and the price was \$50 per pound, but the Mayo clinic got control of it and reduced the price to \$4.50 per pound. The treatment requires one pound per month, costing \$4.50, and it is subject to a duty of thirty-five per cent and sales tax of eight per cent. In view of the fact that recovery is not possible, and that when a child is afflicted it requires treatment over a long period of years, which means a steady drain upon the financial resources of the parents, I think we might well include this medicine in the same category as liver extract, and the minister might agree to an amendment for its free admission and its exemption from sales tax when imported for the treatment of muscular dystrophy. I have already given much of this information to the minister, but I had not communicated to him the subject matter of the newspaper item which I received this morning. It is a statement from Doctor Barraclough, of the Hospital for Sick Children, Toronto, that the disease is incurable. The man in Regina whose child was afflicted wrote to Doctor Barraclough in the hope that there might be some further relief, but Doctor Barraclough's reply was that the disease was incurable, and that this medicine, glycine, afforded some relief. I would be very glad indeed if the minister under these circumstances would include glycine, giving it as favourable consideration as liver extract.

Mr. LEADER: In support of what the hon. member for Regina has just said, we have in Portage la Prairie a case of a child who is afflicted with this disease and has been declared incurable. The only source from which this medicine can be procured—I forget the name of it but the minister will perhaps remember—is from Rochester, Minnesota, from the Mayo brothers. I expect it is the same medicine that my hon. friend from Regina city mentioned a moment ago. I have already taken the matter up with the minister, and while he has not given me an entirely satisfactory answer I trust he will reconsider my request coming as it does now in conjunction with that of the hon. member for Regina City, and exempt this medicine at least from the application of the sales tax, if not the duty.

Mr. DUNNING: I think the circumstances related by the two hon. members who have just spoken are such as to arouse

[Mr. McNiven.]

the sympathy of the committee to consider placing this medicine glycine on the list of articles exempted from sales tax. I may tell my hon. friend from Regina city that I have simply had no time or opportunity to check up thoroughly on the matter since he brought it to my attention. In connection with matters involving the use of a name such as this it is desired to check up very carefully. If, as I think will probably be the case, the committee would be sympathetic to doing something of the kind suggested, perhaps it might meet the case if it were understood that between now and the time the bill covering these matters comes up, we would endeavour to get all the particulars about this medicine, and if everything my hon. friends say is confirmed, we can include it in the bill. It would not be quite regular, but we could amend the bill in that manner.

Mr. BENNETT: Amend the bill.

Mr. DUNNING: That, I think, is more desirable than making the amendment here simply by inserting a name. I should like to make very sure about the matter. I would ask my hon. friend the Minister of National Health to give me his opinion on the question, but I do not believe he has ever heard of the medicine. I should, however, appreciate any scientific assistance that he can give me in the matter if it would facilitate our doing something along the line suggested.

Mr. POWER: To-morrow.

Mr. McNIVEN (Regina): I thank the minister very much. There is another matter to which I should like to direct the attention of the minister. I am informed that a device which is used for the extermination of gophers is exempt from this particular tax, but that the ingredients of the gopher poison which is used are subject to the eight per cent sales tax. The ingredients are strychnine and certain other commodities, all subject to the sales tax, while the completed preparation is exempt. Now, the gopher is a real western menace, and municipalities throughout the western provinces annually spend many hundreds of thousands of dollars in the extermination of the gopher. We are very anxious indeed that when the western crop does come it shall be preserved from the ravages of the gopher, and it would facilitate matters very much and be of real assistance to the municipalities if the ingredients going into the manufacture of this gopher poison could be exempted from the provisions of the sales tax.