

die than go into debt and allow his farm to be sold and leave his wife without a dollar. The other day I learned the story of a maid who was earning \$10 a month; she became ill and was taken to hospital for an operation which cost \$150 plus the hospital bill. When can she pay it? That sort of thing is very effective in driving people to certain shades of thinking.

I am convinced that it is the duty of christian Canada to look after her sick. That is part of the program laid down by the Great Physician when he said: Feed the hungry; clothe the naked; visit the sick and go to those in gaol. We cannot pass by on the other side and disregard that program and call ourselves a christian nation.

I know there are many arguments against this proposal. You can get arguments against anything, as I have observed since I have been in this house. It is desirable that we should hear these arguments against state medicine or health insurance, both to show up any weaknesses as well as to demonstrate its strength. I know from reading the book of Job that the devil can justify his position, and from reading the book of Matthew that he can quote Scripture to serve his purpose. I am not particular whether it is state medicine or some other form of medical care for our people so long as our government takes up this task. I have paid my tribute in another way to the right hon. leader of the opposition (Mr. Bennett) who has grown so much in my estimation as a man of ability and a fair-minded man; as one who shows great skill in finding the weak spots in legislation, as well as being willing to approve of what is good. I think of the government as having intelligence and ability and willingness to learn, and with great resources at their disposal, willing to treat their fellow men as brothers. I think of the Minister of Pensions and National Health (Mr. Power), with his courage and readiness to be in the front line trench. I think of the Minister of Finance (Mr. Dunning) having the ability to find the money for every worthy cause, as he did in the case of pensions for the blind. I am convinced that these two ministers are not going to stand back or allow their fellow ministers to clothe themselves in priestly robes and take on sacerdotal airs and pass by on the other side while those who are sick are left to fend for themselves.

Knowing that Canadian health is Canadian wealth, we cannot afford to trifle with the physical and mental well-being of our citizens. In other words, it costs more not to have state medicine than to have it.

[Mr. McIvor.]

Mr. J. P. HOWDEN (St. Boniface): Mr. Speaker, if the motion requires a seconder, I should like to take that privilege. My first words must be those of congratulation to the mover (Mr. McIvor). For a number of years we have been close friends, having lived for some time only a door or two apart on the same street. We have played together, hunted together, visited the sick together and gone to church together. The hon. member may not have been at my convention, but it was my privilege to be at his and later to congratulate him when the votes were counted. He apologized, in a way, for having brought the motion before the house; no apology need have been made. There is no doubt that the hon. member's incentive in bringing the motion before the house was his ingrained interest in, and sympathy and love for, humanity. May I congratulate him upon having revived the subject on this occasion.

What is state medicine? A great deal has been said in the United States and in Canada in the last ten years about state medicine, but I believe I have never seen the term defined. In fact, a questionnaire directed to Doctor Routley, Grand Secretary of the Canadian Medical Association, brought this response:

The Canadian Medical Association has not adopted any official definition of the term "state medicine" but it is my view that the council would likely be in agreement upon the following definition:

"By state medicine is meant a system of medical administration by which the state provides medical services for the entire population, or a large group thereof, and under which all practitioners are employed, directed and paid by the state, on a salary basis."

I should say it would be sufficient to define state medicine as provision by the state or government for the medical care of the sick. This definition would be broad enough and elastic enough to fit any set of conditions, from the mere payment of medical fees to a medical man for services rendered to the state, to the complete medical service such as, so far, we see in only one part of the world—to me, the ideal condition—namely, state medicine as it is practised in Russia.

Is state medicine desirable? I ask the question, and seek to answer it in the affirmative, under three headings. I would say, yes, first because it would limit the spread of infection and the incidence of death, and, second, because it would eliminate the uneven distribution of the cost of medical services to the people. May I put it in another way: it would afford an adequate system of medicine to the wage earner and the low salaried man. The third reason is that it would