

Medicare

A few lines further on they say:

Quality depends primarily on the supply, availability, knowledge, skill, and dedication of professionally qualified personnel, second on the facilities at their disposal and third on the organization of the services.

Those are your priorities: first, supply; second, facilities; third, organizations, and in that order. Those who use the Hall Commission report as their bible should pay some attention to the report and should not quote it out of context. When we say we are in favour of starting programs and plans now, we mean it; we mean now—not in 1968 or on whatever other date the Minister of Finance (Mr. Sharp) will decide. Of course we do not know it because who can read his mind.

I must confess that I consider the speech made by the hon. member for Cartier (Mr. Klein) to have been one of the most fatuous speeches to which I have ever listened. I am amazed at some of the statements he made. For instance he mentioned that we should cut down the standards of medical care and let more people in so we can have more doctors. Does the hon. member mean to tell me this could possibly be the government's policy, that what we want is just quantity, not quality? I could not believe my ears when I heard this in the house yesterday. He made some further comments which are quite beyond belief. I do not think they are even worthy of comment. I sincerely hope, for the sake of the hon. member's profession, that the same does not happen to his particular profession of law.

In summary, Mr. Speaker, I will say that I do not believe that this bill need be delayed. I think this is a smokescreen to cover some of the difficulties that have occurred in the cabinet. It is a smokescreen to cover up the fact that we do not have enough doctors to properly implement such a plan, and we do not have the co-operation of the provinces. Just imagine: We are unable to bring in a medical care plan now to cover those who are in need, and this during a time of prosperity. If we cannot bring it in now, I ask you Mr. Speaker, when we will be able to do so. Will it be in 1968, 1969, 1970 or 1975? This complete disregard of those who need help now is something to which we on this side of the house will never subscribe.

• (7:30 p.m.)

There are those who say we are trying to kill this bill by the introduction of an amendment. I ask them to go back to the railway legislation and the amendment introduced on

[Mr. Brand.]

August 30, 1966. This amendment can be found at page 7804 of *Hansard*, and reads in part as follows:

This house declines to proceed with the second reading of a bill—

Surely that amendment and the subamendment moved by the hon. member for Burnaby-Coquitlam (Mr. Douglas) would have had the effect of killing the bill. Evidently they believe it is all right to do this in connection with the railways, but not medicare. As a result of those amendments we got a bill that was at least acceptable to the railway workers, so why can we not get a bill which will be acceptable to the people of Canada and to those who have to provide the service?

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Rinfret): Order. I regret to interrupt the hon. member but the time allotted for his speech has expired.

Mr. Barry Mather (New Westminster): It is not my intention, Mr. Speaker, to repeat at any length the criticisms my colleagues have so ably made of the government's failure to proceed with medicare. I do not think there is any need to reiterate the fact that the government has actually reneged on a rather basic undertaking to the Canadian public. Nor is there any need for members on this side of the house to emphasize the fact that many members, particularly the backbenchers on the other side, are embarrassed by the situation in which they find themselves. There is no need to say again and again, as has been pointed out by many members, that government spokesmen have not really given any realistic explanation of why after all the promises, the government is not going to proceed at this time, with medicare. Certainly, there is very little need to underline the fact that the failure of the government to go ahead, as they had undertaken to do, is leaving a great many Canadians in need of medical care, without that care.

I noticed in the newspapers today, Mr. Speaker, that the Canadian Medical Association, a body not usually given to enthusiastic support of the principle of medicare, has said that the government by its failure to go ahead with this undertaking to introduce a comprehensive universal medical plan, is leaving some five million people who really need medical help right now without that help. I have no doubt that the Minister of National Health and Welfare (Mr. MacEachen) and some of his colleagues in the cabinet have already brought these or similar