

*Medicare*

paraphrase what was said by a former prime minister of Canada, who held office for a long time. I get the quotation from no less an authority than the present Minister of Transport (Mr. Pickersgill). Paraphrasing, the quotation shows that the Right Hon. Mackenzie King did not believe any party or any minority had the right to force the acceptance of its views or its policies upon the community. He felt that persuasion and willing consent were an essential preliminary to political change.

It is my pious hope that the bones of Mackenzie King do not roll in their grave when his ghost sees his successors wielding this financial stick. Is this bill Liberalism? Is this consultation? Is this willing consent? Is this moral persuasion, rather than force? The spiritual leader of the Liberal party said that persuasion was an essential preliminary to political change.

What greater change could there be than forcing the provinces of Canada to knuckle down under a financial stick, and imposing what to me looks like the rankest of socialistic measures. The only real criticism from those on my left is as to the speed with which we ought to impose this bill upon the people. Those hon. members are quite satisfied that it is socialist, but for them it is not socialist enough, nor is it going fast enough. You can hear the old criticism of the Liberals which says that they are socialists, but going too slowly.

I do not believe that. I think it may be that the government, finding itself in financial difficulties and on the crest of inflation, at the eleventh hour is trying to put on the brakes. I think that this wagon has brakes, and it is the duty of every member in this house to put them on to prevent disaster. I am not saying that we must abandon medicare as a proposition, but I say that we should watch inflation carefully.

I do not want hon. members on my left to put words in my mouth, and to say that I am attempting to kill the bill because I do not want to pay the shot, or because I refuse to give social justice. That is far from the truth. I do not want to kill this bill. I want to tailor this bill to make it work. If necessary, I want a reasonable delay to get willing consent from the provinces.

The second part of the amendment states that legislation would be satisfactory only if, among other things, it—

—(b) recognizes the principle of voluntary choice by the individual.

[Mr. Bigg.]

Again, I do not want to accept the process where I am fed through the mouth, or force fed, as a goose is, with all foods. I may not want some of the foods. If I have enough initiative to be able to pay for my own, should I not have the right to choose what I want?

• (4:50 p.m.)

This is not to say I do not believe in looking after people who are incapable of looking after themselves. Paragraph (d) of our amendment makes it clear that we believe no citizen of Canada should go without medical care. That is what I believe. I, for one, am willing to pay for that medical care. I always hope I shall be in a position to look after my own medical needs and that I shall always be in a position to help those less fortunate than myself. That is conservatism at its best, whether with a capital "c" or a small "c". The fact that I am willing to look after my father and my mother is not an invention of the socialist party. It is as old as Moses, and even older than that; we find it wherever decent animals congregate, let alone human beings.

I give hon. members credit for not criticizing that part of our amendment which speaks of the importance of making prior provision for sufficient medical research, and the training of adequate numbers of doctors and other medical personnel. There is nothing gained by building a race track if you do not have any horses.

With the best wishes in the world, you cannot have your children's tonsils cut out unless you have a doctor who is skilled, and who is ready and able to fiddle around your children's throats with a sharp knife. Let us make sure that in the plan to bring about this Utopia we all desire we do not forget the preparations which are necessary, and if we have to do a little more planning, or spend a little more money to get the desired results, we should be ready to do so.

Do not think I am against taking out the tonsils of your children or my children or anyone else's children. That does not wash. I hope the people of Canada are getting sick of this, and the sycophant treatment of every question that comes up. If I do not agree with you I am something vicious, something terrible, something obscure. Do you think I want any of your children to go without medical care? I want them all to have it. All I ask is that we should put our minds to it and find out the best, the most efficient and the most economic way of doing it.