

Energy Program, FIRA and so on; and that the Americans will be looking for a way to punish this government and Canadians generally for some of its other anti-American actions. There is a clear need, the companies have told us, for our diplomats and our government to intercede at this point, to intervene in the interest of Canada and in the interest of this important industry which is already on its knees.

What is the minister doing? What can he tell us today? Will he give instructions to the embassy in Washington? Will he dispatch his officials? Will he himself meet with his counterpart in the United States to assure that what he asserts with respect to this report will actually coincide with fact?

**Hon. Ed Lumley (Minister of State (International Trade)):** Madam Speaker, obviously I cannot make an assurance on behalf of the United States government. We have made representations at the political level, at the diplomatic level, and at the administrative level. We are very confident, Madam Speaker, based on the information given during those hearings and regardless of some of the political statements made by certain congressmen in the United States, that the United States special trade representative will not find any grounds for imposing sanctions as suggested by some of the political leaders in the United States.

\* \* \*

### HEALTH CARE

#### EXTRA BILLING BY PHYSICIANS—MINISTER'S POSITION

**Hon. Edward Broadbent (Oshawa):** Madam Speaker, I have a question for the Minister of National Health and Welfare. For three years the minister has talked tough inside and outside the House about the need to remove extra billing from our medicare system, arguing quite correctly that this was contrary to the principle of medicare itself. Yesterday she had the chance to deliver. Considering that she began yesterday's meeting once again by asserting that extra billing was contrary to the spirit of medicare and that steps had to be taken to remove it, my question is straightforward. Why did she cave in?

**Hon. Monique Bégin (Minister of National Health and Welfare):** Madam Speaker, that same minister has the pleasure to announce to the House today, and to all Canadians, that she has now the agreement of all the provinces, the agreement in writing of all the provinces, that the question of extra billing—which in a way she was alone in speaking on, at times—the question of extra billing is now one which will be addressed and that the control of it will be part of conditions to make sure that medicare remains universal, which has always been our objective. I am very pleased with the co-operation of all the provinces.

**Some hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

### Oral Questions

#### REQUEST THAT MINISTER RESIGN

**Hon. Edward Broadbent (Oshawa):** Madam Speaker, the minister has said no more in her words now than she said for three years, no more than she conceded yesterday. I would like to begin my question with this. Just last month she said:

If you permit additional surcharges in the system for Canadians who can afford to protect themselves against it . . . you are back to pre-medicare days and very rapidly the whole system will collapse. Do not kid yourself, this is abolishing the universality of the program. You cannot have it both ways.

That is what the minister said. I agree with her. Considering that yesterday she said something which flatly contradicts this, namely, she is accepting the principle of extra billing but simply wants to control it, I say to her that she cannot control it both ways. Will she have the integrity to resign?

• (1425)

**Hon. Monique Bégin (Minister of National Health and Welfare):** Madam Speaker, I could give the hon. member a long list of *Hansard* quotations in which I answered his colleague, the hon. member for Winnipeg-Birds Hill, that a ban on extra billing could not be imposed unilaterally by the federal government. The hon. member prefers to call it a ban. I have not requested a ban on extra billing from provincial ministers. I have expressed to them word for word what the hon. member quotes as something I have often said to Canadians. I suppose I have been pretty convincing, because control of extra billing is now part of the dossier of negotiations. This is a great stride toward strengthening medicare for all Canadians once and for all.

**Some hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Broadbent:** The minister is a master of linguistic solutions to the problem. She used to talk about removing extra billing. Now we hear hypocrisy; she is talking about controlling extra billing. That is very different.

#### PRINCIPLE OF UNIVERSALITY

**Hon. Edward Broadbent (Oshawa):** Madam Speaker, the minister has just said the federal government does not have the necessary authority. I would like to act with the provinces in this area. The minister's boss, the Prime Minister, said in 1980:

—the federal government must use its powers to bring the provinces back to the principle of universality.

That is what the Prime Minister said. Is the minister now saying that the Prime Minister was wrong? If the Prime Minister was right, why does the minister not get up and say that the federal government will bring the provinces into line?

**Hon. Monique Bégin (Minister of National Health and Welfare):** Madam Speaker, to a master of rhetoric I would like to say that I cannot do that for a very simple reason, and that is that there is a Constitution in this country. We helped to bring it about, and we respect it. The ten provinces happen to be in charge of administering health services in Canada, and we happen to distribute about half the cost of those services