

in accordance with what it considers the needs and requirements of its people, I probably should not be speaking here tonight. After all, we are taxpayers provincially and we are taxpayers federally, and it can come out of one pocket or out of two pockets and be shared in that way. It does not affect the taxpayer. However, that is not what is being done.

This is one more evidence of the new socialism. The new socialism is based on the philosophy that government—and it seems particularly true of the federal Government—knows better what should be done for the people than the people know themselves. So we have the provision of universality. We continue to narrow the area within which the individual can exercise his own judgment regarding his own affairs.

I do not for a moment suggest that there should be any person in this country who, if medical help is available—and I wish to underline that to honourable senators—if medical help is available, should not be entitled to it, and without any financial barrier, if he needs it.

The Province of Ontario has a plan which is universally available. I agree with universal availability, but I do not agree to a plan which tells the Province of Ontario that it must enlist 90 per cent, and subsequently 95 per cent, of the people in it. This is a plan which, we are told, does not impose any details on the province—it merely lays down that you have to come in, that the plan must be universal.

The bill describes the scope of the benefits, subject to that flexibility amendment which the Minister of National Health and Welfare was forced to make. It must be comprehensive—that is included in the scope of the benefits. It must be administered by a public agency—with a slight refinement which the sponsor has set out. Also, it must be portable.

This means that there is very little more which they could add, except to specify the names of the officials, the bureaucrats, who will administer the scheme in a province.

The Province of Alberta has a scheme which is universally available and which it, like the Province of Ontario, subsidizes. There is no money barrier in those provinces. Why do we have to proceed on the basis that the federal Government knows better than the governments of, say, the Province of Ontario and the Province of Alberta, as to what

should be done for their citizens in a field which is primarily the responsibility of the province?

It is the old case of "father knows best." It is also a species of blackmail. The Minister of Finance made that very clear when he spoke to the provincial premiers and finance ministers early this fall. He referred to the desire of the federal Government to move out of some of the cost-sharing programs. He referred to those programs being financed later by what he called tax transfers, equalized under the General Revenue Equalization Formula, plus a program of equalization payments calculated and escalated to ensure that the provinces were fairly dealt with. He forestalled the obvious question—"What if the provinces radically change the program?"—by saying that the programs had been in effect long enough that no province, in his opinion, would dare change it, and that the federal Government was therefore satisfied to do this. That is what he says in section 8 of this bill. In effect, he is saying: When I have forced you to conform for five years, this matter will have become so interwoven into the social and economic fabric that you will not dare give it up, and I will be able to move aside another few points on the personal tax or the corporate tax.

He cannot move very much further aside on the personal income tax, on his own admission. We will have an opportunity later this session, or early in the next session, to discuss some of the Honourable Mr. Sharp's categorical statements, such as that he must have 50 per cent of the personal income tax or he cannot fulfill his responsibility as Minister of Finance in the fiscal and monetary field. Personally, I do not believe that that statement is correct, but we will discuss it later.

Honourable senators, at the appropriate time my colleagues will introduce amendments to this bill. If it is not amended materially, we are taking another long step towards that socialistic state of which the Minister of National Health and Welfare at the moment seems to be the principal advocate in the present Government.

Honourable senators, having said that, I feel sure the sponsor of the bill realizes that my remarks are not directed to the quality or tone of his remarks, and may I take this opportunity of congratulating him upon his maiden speech in this chamber.

Hon. Joseph A. Sullivan: Honourable senators, it was with some degree of misgiving and anticipation, and now it is with a greater