

Medicare

over the heads of the provinces and say, "We are not interested in whether we are invading provincial jurisdiction. We are invading it because we have the money and supreme power to tax the provinces and we can get the money for our purposes. We are not worried in this respect." The other day the Minister of Finance (Mr. Sharp) said he would increase taxes by \$350 million this year in his baby budget. He knows he has the ultimate power to tax the public, and he is not worried.

After taxing the provinces to this extent, this government comes back to the provinces and says, "We have the money. You toe the mark." Is this co-operative federalism? When this government took over office two years ago, this was not their interpretation of co-operative federalism. I find it difficult to believe that even this government has so eroded this principle in such a short period of time. It thought it was the father of the term "co-operative federalism". I would not give this government credit for being the father. They may own the funeral home that will bury this principle, because that is what this legislation is actually doing.

Mr. Cashin: Mr. Speaker, would the hon. gentleman permit a question?

Mr. Horner (Acadia): Certainly.

Mr. Cashin: Would the hon. gentleman care to inform the house whether he is going to vote for or against this bill?

Mr. Horner (Acadia): I have no hesitation in informing any hon. member how I stand and how I will vote on any particular piece of legislation. I wonder about the concern of the hon. member as to how I shall vote, because this scheme is not going to be implemented for two years anyway. I should like to think that my vote would be the deciding one, because then I might give it a great deal of consideration.

Mr. MacEachen: How are you going to vote? You are not sure.

Mr. Horner (Acadia): I am certain how I shall vote, and I would be pleased if the minister would stand up and answer some of the criticism I have levelled at this legislation.

Mr. Cashin: Your criticism is too devastating.

Mr. Horner (Acadia): The hon. member is a little worried about the new member from [Mr. Horner (Acadia).]

Newfoundland, and that his prominence in this house may diminish. The premier of Newfoundland is about to retire and there is some doubt as to who will be his successor, the child-wonder who asked the question, or the new brainchild of the Liberal party from that province.

Mrs. Rideout: How are you going to vote?

Mr. Horner (Acadia): You will have to wait and watch.

Mr. MacEachen: You don't know yet.

Mr. Horner (Acadia): There is no doubt about how I will vote.

• (8:00 p.m.)

[Translation]

Mr. Gilles Grégoire (Lapointe): Mr. Speaker, I should like to come back to the amendment which says that while we accept that all Canadians be covered by medicare, we would also like to see added in the bill a section providing fiscal compensation for the provinces which way prefer to adopt their own medicare plan.

The other evening, while discussing Bill No. C-227, I mentioned that if Quebec wanted to adopt its own plan by 1972 instead of accepting the federal plan, Quebecers would then be paying taxes toward the cost of the federal plan from which the other provinces would benefit and a second tax for the cost of the plan implemented in the province of Quebec.

Mr. Speaker, to my mind, the amendment is perfectly logical and I was pleased to second it when my friend, the hon. member for Sherbrooke (Mr. Allard) moved it.

It so happens that health is under provincial jurisdiction and that the provinces, for want of money, have not been able to implement a medicare plan, but if they had the money required, they would be able to do so.

It so happens that the federal government took fiscal resources away from Quebec and, having the major share of the fiscal revenue coming from outside, wants to implement such a plan and is ready to pay half the cost.

If the federal government is ready to pay half the cost of a medicare plan, why would it not give the fiscal equivalent to the provinces so that they could set up their own plans? That, it seems to me, would make sense. I think that it has already been done in the field of hospital insurance. For instance, Quebec has been able to opt out of