

in 1979 and also the 1982 response to the early drafts of the health care legislation. I am fully aware of the contribution they want to make to health care services. I might say that I find myself supporting, did then, do now and will support, the essentials of their brief. I can recall one definition being made. One asked: what is the difference between a doctor and a nurse? The response from the Canadian Nurses Association was that in Canada the cut-off point is at the fiftieth degree parallel. North of the fiftieth degree parallel nurses provide an enormous amount of medical care, and the farther you go south the less of it they provide.

Having said that, and obviously I did not have time to deal with it in my speech, it seems to me the most important thing is to understand that there is that explosion of health care opportunities for all health care workers and health professionals. We are going to see a brand new array of health care professionals and health care workers in the field. Doctors already understand that they are not the first and only point of entry into the system. I am hoping that as we move along—we should have started earlier—we will be able to expand the points of entry through community based clinics and so on.

Mr. Blaikie: Mr. Speaker, could I ask the Hon. Member for Rosedale whether he is not also aware that again it has been in those provinces which have had New Democratic Party governments—with the exception of some of the initiatives in Toronto to which he referred and for which maybe he was responsible, and if so, I commend the Hon. Member for it—where the idea of a community clinic has been most advanced, sometimes advanced over the opposition, I can say quite factually, of Progressive Conservative Parties in those provinces. Once you have a community clinic you begin to get an integrated, holistic view of medicine, and then you begin to ask questions about how our economy affects the health of people. Once you begin to ask those kinds of questions, you begin to develop a critique of a whole economic system. That is one of the reasons there has been resistance to community clinics. In that respect, I would like to ask the Hon. Member for Rosedale why it is that he spends so little time on the environmental and occupational aspects of his new concept of health? If he had spent more time on them he would have had to address the problem of how he stacks up those concerns against what is called the investment climate and the profit strategies of corporations that would be affected if we were to have rigid environmental, occupational, health and safety laws. How does the Hon. Member address those difficult questions within the context of the PC ideology?

● (1600)

Mr. Crombie: Mr. Speaker, I have a short response. If the Hon. Member is trying to imply that somehow it is only Conservative and Liberal provinces which have allowed the principles of opting out and extra billing, I suggest he look at the history of both Saskatchewan and Manitoba which had NDP governments. In Saskatchewan, the Hon. Member's own Province, they had Mode 3. He knows it; he just will not talk about it. Mode 3 allowed opting out and extra billing through-

Canada Health Act

out the time the NDP was in power. In Manitoba today, which has an NDP government, there is opting out and extra billing. This is what I meant when I referred to the arrogance of a monopoly on morality which the NDP has always tried to hang on people and which does not bear up in truth.

Mr. Blaikie: You guys never did anything about it.

Mr. Crombie: If the Hon. Member will give me a chance to answer, with respect to environmental legislation and occupational health and safety regulations, there is no province in the country ahead of the Province of Ontario, which has had a Progressive Conservative government for 40 years.

Mr. Herb Breau (Gloucester): Mr. Speaker, I am very happy to take part in the debate today on Bill C-3 to establish the Canada Health Act. Also I am very proud to be part of the political Party which forms the Government and has seen fit to propose this piece of legislation. I congratulate the Minister of National Health and Welfare (Miss Bégin) for her efforts over the last few years to mount political opinion and to gather political support in the country in order to convince the Government to bring forward this Bill as a Government measure.

It is very interesting to hear Conservative Members rationalizing their position on the Canada Health Act. It used to be said in Canada that there was nothing wrong with the New Democratic Party, except that its members were just Liberals in a hurry. Now we see that the Conservatives are late Liberals. They now see their real positions and are trying to take credit for this legislation. I do not want to make fun of their position because I am proud that the federal Government is involved in the financing of a national program. In an area which comes under provincial jurisdiction, it is always better to have as broad a consensus as possible. I am very happy that the three Parties in the House of Commons agree to the principles of the Canada Health Act.

This should not take any credit away from the fact that basically there are two groups which are interested in these broad political questions—those who are for the ordinary people and those who are for protecting vested interests. I could not let this occasion pass without saying how much pleasure I have had in witnessing the Conservatives seeing the light on how important it is to protect the five basic principles of medicare and to support the new Canada Health Act.

We all know how difficult it was for the new Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Mulroney), when he was in Central Nova last summer, to explain to provincial Premiers why they should stop talking against the Minister of National Health and Welfare and that they should accept that to be a good leader for the country he had to support medicare. The way he got out of this predicament is very funny. They are supposed to be an honest Party, they are supposed to be the Conservative Party. They complain all the time about high deficits and about the importance of the integrity of the fiscal position of the federal government and they talk about the dangers of increasing the debt. Yesterday the Hon. Member for Provencher (Mr. Epp)