

*Medicare*

party implies. And I would be very proud to go over the list of all the social measures introduced and put on the statute books by the Liberal government. I would look at the Conservative opposition with a degree of provocative satisfaction and I would say: "What have you done?" Because it is impossible to escape from that partisan point of view when one belongs to a party.

Of course, if I were a Conservative member, I would remember that I belong to the official opposition and that it is my duty, as a member of the house, to filibuster. I would like to think that I would find reasons to annoy the government and help my party politically.

If I were a member of the New Democratic Party, I would step on the accelerator to promote socialization, and even socialism under all circumstances. And God knows that such a piece of legislation is a favourable one.

If I were a member of Social Credit, I would miss no opportunity to advocate monetary reform. This is another field where, when speaking of the needs of the people one can easily ring the bell of monetary reform.

If I were, like my colleague the hon. member for Sherbrooke (Mr. Allard), a professor of constitutional law, who knows all the shades and the subtleties of these legal matters, convinced as he is that provincial-federal responsibilities have to be protected by conscientious watchdogs who have this ability to study the subtleties of legislation, I would say also, in each of these circumstances, that it is part of my duty to ring the alarm bell and prevent infringement of this constitution governing the relations between the federal government and the provinces.

But, Mr. Speaker, I am just a layman who, moreover, benefits by this favourable condition and does not have to deal with those things. Anyhow, these things have been perfectly well done. I would be redundant in trying to start over again. I am content with gathering what has been said by all the parties, because very constructive things have been said, and we must recognize that this debate has brought light on the subject.

Therefore, very calmly and very objectively, I will be content with drawing from everything that has been said by all parties and thus make this contribution to the bill before us.

First of all, what strikes me, Mr. Speaker, is that I noticed a consensus in favour of the medical care plan. That is reassuring in itself. I think everybody, or nearly everybody, said

[Mr. Mongrain.]

they were in favour of the principle. That is something in itself. Objections were raised for constitutional reasons, for more specific reasons concerning some aspects of the bill, but I think it can be said for once that everybody agrees on the principle of the bill.

The Progressive Conservative amendment impressed me, Mr. Speaker. At first sight I was inclined to support it and vote for it. I see, for instance, that they ask that consideration of the bill be postponed so that the co-operation of the governments of the provinces of Canada may be secured in the first place. This is a serious argument, Mr. Speaker. It cannot be dismissed without due consideration. The other point does not recognize the principle of voluntary choice by the individual. This is another worthy point. I believe that the report of Mr. Justice Hall mentioned that very eloquently when it says that this should be a basic condition.

The third point is to the effect that the plan will not be satisfactory unless it makes adequate prior provision for sufficient medical research, as well as the training of adequate numbers of doctors and other medical personnel.

• (3:00 p.m.)

To be sure, there is a serious deficiency in this field; the argument is therefore serious. The amendment also says:

(d) immediately provides for those persons who are unable, for financial reasons, to provide medical services for themselves.

I believe that here also, everyone will agree that the matter is serious.

However, Mr. Speaker, having listened to all the arguments and weighed the evidence, I feel I cannot support the amendment because I fear it will delay the passing of the bill.

I would submit, however, that the government should at least consider the principle of the amendment, consider it seriously as a statement of constructive suggestions which should eventually be incorporated in the bill before us, if they are not already fully incorporated.

But Mr. Speaker, I must say that I share the opinion of the majority and I approve the principle of the bill; I even approve it as it now stands, while recognizing that certain aspects could be improved and will eventually be improved, I hope, following future consultations with the provincial authorities.

To my mind, the most serious objection was raised by my colleague, the member for