

Medicare

monolithic state-administered scheme. This will, in itself, be an expensive measure and one that is not at all necessary to ensure an adequate medical services coverage across this nation.

I would therefore, urge a different attitude toward the amendments which are being presented during the study of the bill in committee of the whole. There are sound economical reasons for changing several aspects of the bill.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Ricard: Mr. Chairman, I would like to take advantage of the debate on this bill to say a few words.

Some time ago I had the opportunity to express my views on the need for a medical care plan and they have not changed. I think it is necessary, particularly to fight poverty, to take the necessary steps so that the less fortunate Canadian citizens will see in the legislation now under consideration a ray of hope.

However, I am afraid that the plan which is now before us includes a number of imperfections and drawbacks, and it is absolutely necessary to convince the minister to remedy the situation and take under consideration the amendments proposed to him.

During the debate I was greatly surprised by the minister's attitude. He showed himself uncompromising and inflexible. Amendments which certainly deserved to be studied and considered by the minister were simply rejected and did not get any consideration at all.

The official opposition moved several amendments, through the hon. member for Simcoe East (Mr. Rynard) who is certainly well-informed as far as public health is concerned. However, in spite of all the hon. member's experience, he did not get the minister to agree to anything.

The same thing happened to the amendments moved by—

Mr. Tremblay: Mr. Chairman, may I ask the hon. member a question?

Mr. Ricard: Certainly, Mr. Chairman.

Mr. Tremblay: The hon. member says the minister did not consider the amendments: in fact, none of those amendments were studied by the house, because they were all ruled out of order by the chairman of the committee of the whole.

Mr. Ricard: Yes, I agree with the hon. member for Matapédia-Matane. On the other

[*Mr. Johnston.*]

hand, it must be noted that every time an amendment was put before the house, the hon. minister did his very best to convince the chairman of the committee of the whole not to allow them.

Mr. Tremblay: On technical points, not on the issue.

Mr. Ricard: Consequently, we can rightly say, and on this the hon. member for Matapédia-Matane will surely agree with me, that when one campaigns against something, one is opposed to it. Therefore, when the minister used the time of the house to refute the merits of the proposed amendments, he was in fact expressing—

Mr. Tremblay: His respect for the standing orders of the house.

Mr. Ricard:—his disapproval of the proposed amendments.

The member for Matapédia-Matane may use all his knowledge to try to contradict that argument, but I know that, in his innermost heart, he agrees with me on those principles.

Mr. Chairman, I would like to carry on my remarks to remind the house that we are now dealing with a field coming exclusively under the jurisdiction of the provinces. The member for Matapédia-Matane recognized that fact yesterday; consequently, the requirements and the views of the provinces must not be forgotten or ignored. As far as Ontario is concerned, we know that its government instituted its own medical care scheme. Incidentally, may I say that I think that this Ontario scheme meets the requirements and the aspirations of the citizens of Ontario. That is the reason why the government of Ontario looks unfavourably upon the fact that the present minister wants to interfere in a field already covered.

Tomorrow, the first session of the 28th parliament will open in Quebec. Tomorrow will be read the Speech from the Throne proclaiming the measures the new government intends to take. I would not be the least surprised if the Speech from the Throne contained something concerning the bill before us. In any event, it is a fact that the government of the Union Nationale has already ordered an inquiry in that regard. The government of the province of Quebec does not want to commit itself without first studying thoroughly the question of health insurance.

• (3:50 p.m.)

I would be inclined to think, Mr. Chairman, in view of the haste shown by the government in having this legislation passed, that they