

*Supply*

West indeed pursuing that argument, arguing for the end to universality.

As I have mentioned, we have heard clear statements from the premier of Quebec, from the minister of health in Quebec and from the minister of finance in Quebec that it is time Quebec be permitted to institute user fees. What the Quebec government should be doing clearly is protecting Quebec citizens from financial ruin in the event of the need to access health care. It should not be loading a further financial burden on them when they become sick.

When Dr. Augustin Roy, head of the Quebec Corporation of Physicians, was faced with the suggestion that the Quebec government wanted to institute user fees, he said that it would be the end of the Canadian dream of free universal and accessible health care. "It is only a matter of time", he said, "before a two-tier system emerges: one for the rich and one for the poor".

That is what this issue is about. It is a question of whether or not Canadian political parties are standing up for a health care system which is the same for everyone, or whether we are looking for one which is privileged for the rich and less accessible and more expensive for the poor.

The Liberal premiers of Quebec, New Brunswick and Newfoundland have clearly chosen that we should go toward a system which is two-tiered: one for the rich and one for the poor. We in the New Democratic Party and Canadians as a whole refute that suggestion complete, entirely and without any question.

This is not an issue which is debatable to Canadians. Canadians are proud of their health care system. It serves them well. It is unbecoming for the Liberal Party to attack medicare, to attack the very health care system which has served Canada so well. It is also unbecoming for the Reform Party to attack medicare and pretend that it does not want to undermine universality, when quite clearly it does and when quite clearly the leader of the Reform Party has made it plain on a number of occasions that that is his and his party's wish.

• (1040)

We have significant elements of the Conservative caucus and the Conservative Party, both at conventions and in caucus meetings, for example the Alberta caucus of the Conservative Party, arguing for user fees. We have important parts of the government side arguing for the institution of user fees too. What we have here is a gang-up of parties which represent the rich and the elite in Canada. The Conservative Party, the Liberal Party and the Reform Party are ganging up on our health care system, which is something that Canadians quite clearly do not want.

As all Canadians know, at the time of Tommy Douglas and the CCF in Saskatchewan in 1962, the New Democratic Party instituted the health care system in Saskatchewan, ran it without any financial support from the federal government, and argued and pushed for it right through the federal system so that in the end it was introduced by the Lester Pearson government.

The New Democratic Party, the CCF, has been committed to health care from the beginning, remains committed to health care, and will continue to be committed to health care. It is unfortunate that neither the Liberal Party nor the Conservative Party can maintain that commitment.

**Mr. Jesse Flis (Parkdale—High Park):** Madam Speaker, I hope you saw the halo around the head of the member for Saskatoon—Clark's Crossing when he was speaking. Unfortunately the NDP has never learned how to put motions on the Order Paper.

We could have had an excellent debate today had the New Democrats learned how to table a motion. They make an important issue like Canada's health care a partisan issue. Here they are attacking three Liberal premiers and immediately it turns into a partisan debate, not a debate around our health care system.

I would like to ask the hon. member why the NDP motion did not include the fact that the premiers of British Columbia, Saskatchewan and Ontario, the NDP premiers of those three provinces, are closing health centres, are closing beds, and are laying off health care personnel, with nurses going to the United States. Three