

*Medicare*

and he said that a Liberal government would bring this about. He said that this was one of the reasons the Liberals had to have a majority. But they did not get one. This is not the reason that the government is not bringing medicare in now. No one is stopping them from doing so. The Liberal government is deliberately putting medicare off for two years, they are doing that and nobody else.

It has been pointed out that this is not a bill which brings in medicare but a bill which puts off medicare for two years. It is a delaying, a postponing bill. Let us suppose that the opposition brought in the kind of amendment which this muddled government proposes to bring in. What would happen? We would have been accused across this country of putting off medicare by the same people who are now doing exactly the same thing.

Because this Liberal government is going through the motions—I repeat, going through the motions—of placing before this house a meaningless bill with the label “Medicare” printed on it, we are told that the government is bringing in medicare. What the government is doing is condemning Canadians for two more years to go on bearing the heavy cost of medical bills which the Minister of Finance has said are such a burden. He said this with a great deal of emotion at a Liberal convention in order to pacify those who want medicare to be brought in now and in order to heal the wound that has been created both in the cabinet and in the caucus.

I said at the beginning of my remarks that medical costs are a terrible burden to the ordinary family. The Minister of Finance weeps crocodile tears at a Liberal convention and agrees. The Liberals decided that everything was lovely in the best of all possible Liberal worlds, that God was in his heaven while the Liberals were in office, and they knuckled down tamely while the main plank in their social welfare platform was taken out and ruthlessly scrapped by their smiling Minister of Finance.

The Liberals promised medicare by 1967. They trooped right across this country telling Canadians they would get it. The Prime Minister of this country pledged his word. The situation now is that Canadians want medicare, that Canadians are entitled to have medicare, that Canadians should have medicare and should have it now, not in 1968.

I do not know what some of the hon. gentlemen opposite think of this, but I recall

that many of them travelled about the country during the last election campaign promising medicare by July 1, 1967. It is interesting to note that on October 5, 1965, the present Prime Minister said that with provincial co-operation the Liberals hoped and expected that medicare would be a fact on Canada's 100th birthday, July 1, 1967. Well, Mr. Speaker, happy birthday to you too. What has happened to all those hopes and expectations the Canadian people held? In one word —“Sharp's” the word.

The Liberals now come before parliament in a terrible rush saying that this bill must go through. They also say that they made a mistake, that the Liberal party cannot bring in medicare by July 1, 1967. They want to be relieved of their promise but still want to get the credit. How foolish and ridiculous can a government be? This is all a mess of their own creation. The important thing now is that they are trying to use the parliament of this nation as a rubber stamp to absolve them from their sins of omission. We on this side of the house will not buy this. Canadians will not buy this because Canadians from coast to coast know what the Prime Minister promised and they cannot be snowed by this government.

● (6:30 p.m.)

**Mr. Winkler:** Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. I do not like to interrupt the hon. member but I do not see a quorum. I think it is incumbent on the government to maintain a quorum in view of the position that was taken.

**An hon. Member:** The quorum is there.

**Mr. Winkler:** The duty is clear.

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** The hon. member for Grey-Bruce rises on a point of order and points out that there is not a quorum present. It is my duty therefore under the standing orders to ask the Clerk to count the house.

**Mr. Pennell:** I should point out that when the hon. member for Ontario was addressing the house there was a quorum present.

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** Order, please. I recognize the argument that the hon. minister is making but I point out that the attention of the Speaker has been called to the fact that there is no quorum present. That does not give rise to debate or comment. May I ask the Clerk to count the house?

**Mr. Pennell:** There are 20, sir.