

*Medicare*

**The Deputy Chairman:** Order. I think the hon. member is making a speech and is not referring to a point of order.

**Mr. Muir (Lisgar):** I am coming to my point of order, Mr. Chairman.

**The Deputy Chairman:** I think the minister should continue his remarks. If the hon. member wishes to reply to the remarks of the minister, he will be able to do so. The Minister of National Health and Welfare.

**Mr. Muir (Lisgar):** Mr. Chairman, if you will allow me to continue with my point of order, I am just coming to it. I am rising on a point of personal privilege—

**Some hon. Members:** Oh, oh.

**Mr. Muir (Lisgar):**—and I am just coming to my point of order. My point of order is that during this discussion—

**Mr. MacEachen:** Mr. Chairman—

**Mr. Muir (Lisgar):**—some of our speakers have pointed out—

**The Deputy Chairman:** I regret to interrupt the hon. member but I have recognized the Minister of National Health and Welfare.

**Mr. Muir (Lisgar):** But, Mr. Chairman, I am on a point of personal privilege.

**Mr. Churchill:** Mr. Chairman, I rise on a point of order. Surely it is the custom in this house, when an hon. member says he is presenting a point of order, to hear him out. The hon. member—

**Some hon. Members:** Hear, hear.

**Mr. Churchill:**—said three times that he was coming to his point of order. Surely we should hear him on his point of order before Your Honour makes a decision. I ask you, in fairness to the house, to hear the hon. gentleman and let him state his point of order. If there is no point of order, Your Honour can so rule. If the point of order is valid, Your Honour can so rule. I think it is quite unfair and a restriction on freedom of speech to refuse to hear the hon. member.

**Some hon. Members:** Hear, hear.

**The Deputy Chairman:** I regret to hear the hon. member mention unfairness. If the hon. member for Lisgar wishes to raise a point of order, he should state his point of order and not give an explanation of speeches made in this house.

[Mr. Muir (Lisgar).]

**Mr. Muir (Lisgar):** Thank you, Mr. Chairman. In his reply to me the minister said that the reason these amendments could not be accepted was that they involved additional costs. My point of order is that some of our speakers this afternoon pointed out—as an illustration I am taking optometrists—that 70 per cent of eye care is handled by optometrists and it would not cost any more if their services were included in the provisions of the bill than it would if the patients were to go first to a doctor. In fact, it would probably cost less. Thus there would be no additional cost in respect of this particular health service.

**Some hon. Members:** Hear, hear.

**Mr. MacEachen:** Mr. Chairman, I do not intend to deal with the point raised by the hon. member for Lisgar—

**Mr. Muir (Lisgar):** Why not?

**Mr. MacEachen:**—except to say that it is so obvious that the inclusion of additional professions will involve extra costs. The only other conclusion is to believe that either one or another profession at present is a costless profession, and I do not think any of the professions would agree with that.

**Mr. Kindt:** On a point of order, Mr. Chairman, the minister has tried to put across a false statement.

**Mr. Muir (Lisgar):** Absolutely false.

**The Deputy Chairman:** Is this a point of order?

**Mr. Kindt:** Yes, Mr. Chairman.

**The Deputy Chairman:** The Minister of National Health and Welfare.

**Mr. Clancy:** Mr. Chairman, may I ask the minister a question? Is the purpose of this bill to give the best service to all Canadians regardless of what ails them?

**Mr. MacEachen:** Yes, Mr. Chairman. I am sorry that my hon. friend was not in the house to vote for second reading of the bill, or to vote against it as he suggested he would.

**Mr. Simpson:** Where were you this afternoon?

**Mr. MacEachen:** Hon. gentlemen—

**An hon. Member:** You will be sorry for that statement.