

*Medicare*

principle of this bill, to indicate how a one-year postponement is going to assist in curbing an inflationary trend. He owes it to this house to tell us what pressure was brought to bear on him from outside in order to persuade him to exert pressure on the cabinet and the government. It is my personal belief that his decisions was not reached only because of the inflationary trend but also as a result of pressure from outside. I believe that outside pressure forced the government to kneel abjectly because it is in a financial jam and requires the co-operation of the monetary powers to refund bonds and float new loans. We should like to hear an intensive, detailed, factual and honest statement by the Minister of Finance on second reading before we approve this bill in principle.

It is imperative that I explode a myth expounded yesterday by the hon. member for Cartier (Mr. Klein). I listened very carefully to what the hon. gentleman said and rather than take any chance I may misquote him I should like to read from his speech as reported at page 8742 of *Hansard*. He said in part:

Mr. Speaker, I rise in support of medicare.

At page 8743 he said this, and it is a jewel of Liberal wisdom:

It is far more important that this legislation be passed by this house than that it shall come into effect on July 1, 1967 or July 1, 1968. The important thing is that it does become part of the legislation of this country.

Surely that is the greatest bit of political eyewash and political hogwash I have ever heard. He suggests that it is important to get the legislation on the statute books, but that when it is to come into operation is not important. Surely the only interpretation we can possibly place on those words of the hon. member for Cartier is that the Liberals' word is good, particularly after they introduce legislation and it is placed on the statute books. The implication is that the Liberal government, having introduced legislation and having had it placed on the statute books, would put it into effect. My hon. friend should look back on the record of Liberal governments in this country. Not only does their word mean nothing, not only does their commitment mean nothing, not only does their honour mean nothing, but their own legislation does not necessarily mean anything.

● (4:40 p.m.)

I had the honour of being a member of the British Columbia legislature from 1933 to 1953. In 1933 the Liberals campaigned on two

slogans, "work and wages" and "over-all medicare" to cover every citizen of B.C. On November 2, 1933 they were elected with an overwhelming majority, so overwhelming that in a 48-member legislature the official opposition of which I was a member only had 7 seats. What happened to the Liberal promises regarding work and wages? Apart from the time of war when Canadians had to kill or be killed and our production was for destruction and not for consumption, there was no fulfilment of the work and wages policy.

How about the over-all medical plan which was promised to all the citizens of B.C. in the campaign preceding the 1933 election? The Liberals kept their word and in 1936 they introduced over-all medicare for every citizen of British Columbia. The B.C. legislature unanimously passed it and the commissioners were appointed. An advisory board was set up, literature was printed and the legislation was to be put into effect. But then what happened? The medical men of British Columbia said to the B.C. Liberals: "If you put that legislation into effect we will go on strike". That is what happened. Was the grand old Liberal party interested in their own magnificent medicare legislation for the citizens of British Columbia? No. They said to the B.C. medical association: "We bow to your wisdom". That is what they did. The legislation is still on the statute books of British Columbia in 1966 and we still do not have over-all medicare in our province.

The hon. member for Cartier had the unmitigated audacity to rise and say, speaking on specific medicare legislation: "Do not worry about when it starts. Just get the legislation on the statute books." Having had the experience of Liberal promises and kowtowing to the kind of pressure I have just mentioned, we want the legislation on the statute books and we want it written into the legislation that it will go into effect on July 1 of next year. I think we have the right to demand that what we request be granted and that the Liberal promises be fulfilled.

This government operates in a very peculiar manner. Day after day we read the pronouncements of that "Sharp" Minister of Finance sitting on the other side in regard to guide lines and in regard to holding the line on increases in the wages paid to the workers of our country. We are told that these increases should not exceed the increases in the gross national product. They should be held down to 3 or 4 per cent annually. The government tells the useful people of Canada,