

Government Orders

I do not think the people of Canada will ever forget this government's use of that approach with our national medicare system. I do not think those of us who are in this House today would be forgiven if we allowed this legislation to go through without challenging it.

It is not as if there is a void of ideas as to how we can maybe improve the process of handling our medicare system.

I met a gentleman just three weeks ago, Dr. Michael Rachlis. I did not meet his co-author, Carol Kushner. They wrote a book called *Second Opinion*. I recommend it to anyone that is involved in the health care system in this country. It speaks about what is wrong with Canada's health care system and how to fix it. He details not just what some of the problems are with our health care system, but he is also providing all kinds of constructive ideas and solutions where we may be able to improve our medicare system without tampering or cutting back on the universal access and service.

He is talking about numbers where we could save anywhere from \$8 billion to \$16 billion if a proper review and a proper redistribution of the health care system was looked at. I am not saying that I agree with every aspect of all of his recommendations.

There are professionals who have devoted their lives to the medicare system in this country and it is incumbent on us before we take this approach of slashing and cutting back to pick their brains and to use their ideas and try some of these things.

The morale in the health care system today is very low. We are capping doctors. We are turning them into bureaucrats. We are not respecting their entrepreneurial skills. Some of these doctors want to work harder and work longer. They understand that this is a profession that is almost a vocation and yet at the same time, we are stifling them. We are bureaucratizing them in the name of fiscal responsibility.

It is time that we used the creative process in looking at this medicare system because the people of Canada are looking for us to come up with some answers in this House other than cut, cut, cut. The morale of this country, because of this word cut, has never been as low. There are alternatives.

The very last institution in this country that we should be tampering with is our health care system. As a New Democratic Party member said earlier today, it is central to the vision that we have all had and want to continue to have in this country and any attempt to alter or change that is a regressive step that is not going to fare well.

I plead with government members opposite and other members to stand up and oppose this government on this bill. Let us send this legislation back and cut off this thinking that we can tamper with our health care system, which is only going to lead to a further deterioration of the already low morale that exists in this country.

Mr. Fred J. Mifflin (Bonavista—Trinity—Conception): Mr. Speaker, I want to compliment my hon. friend on a forthright and to the point good presentation.

Mr. Milliken: As usual.

Mr. Mifflin: As usual. I know of his genuine concern for our national health care system and the difficult position that our doctors and our nurses and our health care system are getting into, reducing the number of hospital beds and all that sort of thing. It is being faced by all of us. I am sure it is not much different in Toronto from what it is in my riding and indeed all of Newfoundland and Labrador where people are now feeling the pinch. The money is not there, the doctors are worried, the health care boards are worried, hospitals are actually being closed and the number of beds have been reduced.

There is another aspect I am sure the hon member would like to comment on. Unemployment is pretty bad in Toronto right now. It used to be that people from my riding, where traditionally unemployment has been high, would leave for Toronto and indeed the hon. member's riding. Indeed, in the hon. member's riding I think he has a considerable number of people from Newfoundland and Labrador and indeed from my riding. I met a few of them when I was up there a few years ago. It was a real pleasure to meet them. They cannot leave Newfoundland and go to Toronto any more because there is no work in Toronto.

• (1740)

I am sure that the hon. member has discussed this with his constituents. It is a major concern of those of us on this side of the House. I am referring to the way that the government has treated unemployment insurance. Every