

Medicare

Canada seems to be acceptable, but the method by which those medical services are to be applied is where the stumbling block comes.

So far as I am concerned, I favour a scheme of medical services for the entire population, just as I have done with regard to hospitalization, but it does not follow that I favour the method that is being applied by the government. That is the crux of the matter. If the present bill is considered to be—and propoganda has made it such—a medicare bill, then naturally we are inclined to vote for that particular principle, and the amendment which we put in front of the house last week affirmed our belief in introducing medical services for the people of Canada.

But unfortunately when you are called upon to vote for the principle of a bill it is sometimes considered that you are accepting everything that is in the bill, and that is where the difference comes with regard to method. It is only in committee of the whole house, when a bill is considered clause by clause, that an opposition can put forward its alternative schemes for modifying a bill. I hope when we reach committee stage in the procedures of the house we will have the opportunity of attempting to improve this bill, just as we have improved many a bill that has been brought before us by this government. So, from the standpoint of the principle of medicare I support that idea; but with regard to the method proposed by the government I have many grave doubts, and those will have to be expressed when we reach committee stage.

It is my hope that within the course of the next day or so the dominion-provincial conference will give some guidance to the government with regard to this bill. I understand from the press that there are premiers of the various provinces in this country who do not favour the method proposed by the government, and I think it would have been wise to have withheld the bill from further consideration in the House of Commons until the dominion-provincial conference had a chance to deal with the general proposition. After all, all of the premiers at this conference are concerned with medical services for their people, and this surely is the ideal opportunity to get a consensus with regard to the proposal of the federal government, and bring about modifications, if those modifications will meet with general approval.

It is now ten o'clock, Mr. Speaker, and I move the adjournment of the debate.

[Mr. Churchill.]

BUSINESS OF THE HOUSE

● (10:00 p.m.)

Mr. Pennell: Tomorrow we will call either item 82, the medicare bill, or item 101, the resolution dealing with the National Housing Act amendments. This will be followed by item 100, the resolution relating to the program on scientific and research development; then item 93, the resolution respecting the Export Credits Insurance Act; then item 79, second reading of Bill C-229, the Canadian National Railways finance guarantee bill. I re-emphasize that we will call either item 82 or item 101 as the first order of business.

Mr. Knowles: Mr. Speaker, may we be told at what time it will be indicated to us which of these items will be called first.

Mr. Pennell: I hope that tomorrow morning I will be able to communicate with the house leaders and advise them. It may be necessary for the minister to be in another place tomorrow. That is the reason I am putting forward the alternatives.

Mr. Bell (Carleton): Senatorial appointments so soon.

Mr. Pennell: I said another place, not the other place.

[Translation]

Mr. Gilles Grégoire (Lapointe): Mr. Speaker, as there is no parliamentary leader in our group of independents, could we ask the Solicitor General of Canada to inform us also tomorrow morning of the item to be discussed tomorrow afternoon?

[English]

Mr. Pennell: I am sorry, Mr. Speaker, I was not able to follow the hon. member. Would he be kind enough to repeat his question.

[Translation]

Mr. Grégoire: Mr. Speaker, I was asking the Solicitor General of Canada if he would inform us like the house leaders of the various parties, so that we will likewise know where to stand about the discussion tomorrow afternoon?

[English]

Mr. Pennell: Mr. Speaker, I would be glad to do that to accommodate the hon. members to my extreme right.