

Medicare

or by co-operation. Why does this government have to use a club to obtain acceptance on the part of the provinces?

We have heard a great deal of evidence to the effect that hospitalization in Canada is behind the times and that medical services are inadequate. We know that it takes nearly ten people for every doctor to provide the medical services required by the people of this country. It has been brought to our attention during this debate that we must bring in 460 doctors every year in order to meet our demands, because our schools are not capable of producing a sufficient number. The natural question arising from this situation is, why is this so, and the answer is obvious. This is so because we do not have adequate training facilities.

I suggest that our difficulties can be related to the old question of which comes first, the horse or the carriage, the chicken or the egg? The answer to me seems to be that in order to institute an efficient medicare scheme we must obtain the power and the ability to administer it. It has been suggested that the provinces will not be able to meet hospitalization and medical service needs until at least 1975. The brief submitted to the Hall Commission by the province of Nova Scotia, that province from which the minister comes, suggested that it could not meet hospitalization or medical needs until 1975. What will happen in the meantime, particularly in view of the implementation of this new plan?

Under this plan I understand that the federal government will contribute \$14 per capita, which will be met by an equal contribution on the part of the provinces. These provinces must continue to build hospitals in order to catch up with our needs.

Where will the necessary money be found in order to carry out these plans? I am not a Social Crediter, although I come from the province of Alberta, and I know that money does not grow on trees. This money must come from the pockets of our taxpayers. We must have some consideration for the municipalities across this country which are finding it difficult to meet their hospitalization costs. Let us pay attention to those provinces which suggest that we should go slow in the institution of any medicare plan. Let us move into this type of social legislation bit by bit rather than force it all at once down the throats of our provinces.

It is my belief that the federal government should move into the medicare field, but I hope and believe that this government should

[Mr. Horner (Acadia).]

and will seek and obtain the co-operation of the provinces before doing so. Let us drop the 90 per cent coverage requirement and concentrate on providing medical services for pensioners. Let us first help those people of this country who find it more and more difficult to meet the ever rising cost of living.

Perhaps the government should call for a federal-provincial conference on this whole subject before implementing this scheme. This plan is not to be implemented until 1968, 22 months from now, so what is the urgency at this time? Let us bring in medicare for pensioners first; let us do something in this field for our pensionable veterans. Surely it is far more important to look after these people at this time than to bring in this kind of legislation. I urge the minister not to proceed with a plan of this kind before obtaining the full co-operation of all provincial governments.

The last time I spoke on this subject, when we were considering the amendment, I suggested that the minister was proceeding with this legislation, which is not to be implemented until 1968, because his government believes there will be an election perhaps that year, and will be able to use this piece of social legislation as a means of buying Canadian votes. That is exactly what this government did in respect of the pension legislation.

Let me point out specifically what I mean in this regard. If the government is able to have this medicare legislation passed now it will then be in a position to spend millions of dollars of the taxpayers' money in advertising, to induce the taxpayers to vote in their favour at the next election, whether it be in 1967 or 1968. I am sure the government is at this time uncertain when the next election will take place, but they want this legislation passed in order that it may be used as an advertising gambit. This is a deceitful use of the taxpayers' money and a deceitful platform for an election. Medicare will not in any event come into effect for 22 months, so the only reason I can find for the urgency of its passage is, as I have stated, so it can be used as an election advertisement. This is extremely deceitful.

• (7:50 p.m.)

We have heard a great deal about the Hall Commission report, and I should like to refer