

Health Insurance

by my colleague the hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre (Mr. Knowles) to the fact that if another province, such as Prince Edward Island, were added to the five provinces in agreement it would make a difference of less than 1 per cent in the overall percentage figure for Canada. What the government is, in effect, saying is that we will arbitrarily set this particular figure and even if the majority of the people of Canada want to go ahead with health insurance now we will give the right to the sixth province to veto the desires and needs of the majority of the Canadian people.

The reasons that have been advanced thus far for opposing this amendment the C.C.F. has put forward are rather difficult to understand. I note that the minister stated at page 3290 of *Hansard* for April 8, 1957, that the hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre had taken a step by his previously attempted amendment which is calculated to delay the acceptance of this bill more than anything else could do. I do not know just what the minister means by that statement. Surely, he knows that the legislation is going to get the support of all members of this house. The members of this group have stated categorically that whether this amendment is passed or defeated we are prepared to support the legislation on third reading. This amendment, therefore, will certainly not have the effect of delaying this legislation. I do not know whether the minister means opposition within his own party, but certainly it is not because of any opposition expressed by members of the opposition groups. He has his wish, in so far as whole-hearted support of this measure is concerned. I read his remarks very carefully and tried to ascertain just how he could justifiably vote against the present amendment.

The hon. member for Vancouver South suggested that this amendment might take the heat off some of these provinces. I suggest that the way in which to get all 10 provinces into the scheme is to get the scheme into operation as soon as possible. Then those provinces which have not taken part in the scheme will be at such a disadvantage their people are going to bring pressure to bear upon the respective provincial governments to get into the scheme at the earliest possible date. I say sincerely to the minister at this time that if he wants to get all 10 provinces into this scheme the thing to do is to get the scheme into operation with the five provinces that have now agreed. I will guarantee then that the people of Manitoba, if Manitoba does not take part, will bring such pressure to bear upon the Campbell government that if they do not agree they will be removed at the next election. That is the way to get all

[Mr. Ellis.]

the provinces into the scheme. If we are going to sit back and have more delay, and allow the province which has not got the initiative to get into a hospital scheme to veto the desires of our people, then those are tactics designed to delay still further the implementation of this legislation.

It is for that reason I suggest those members who are anxious not only to see this bill passed but to see this scheme put into operation at the earliest possible date should vote for the amendment proposed by the hon. member for Winnipeg North Centre.

Mr. Speaker: I have been deeply troubled by the amendment because of my predecessor's pronouncements in 1952. One day he allowed an amendment for the reconsideration of certain payments to be made in respect of a bill, which was an act for the control and extirpation of foot-and-mouth disease, and that appears at page 23 of the *Journals* of 1952. He reversed his position on March 6, 1952, and he said:

Yesterday when the house was considering third reading of the bill in connection with the foot-and-mouth disease, Mr. Diefenbaker moved an amendment. The Minister of Agriculture contended that the amendment was out of order. However, I allowed it to stand. Since that time I have given further consideration to the amendment and although it may have been technically in order I am rather doubtful of the practical results which would have followed if it had carried. The committee would have reconsidered an amendment which would have necessitated an expenditure of money. But the committee could not have taken any action on the matter without a motion by a member of the government. The government had intimated that it would not propose such an amendment. Accordingly, I am doubtful if any useful purpose would have been served by referring the matter back to the committee. The purpose of this statement is to advise the house that, for the reason which I have stated and for other reasons, should a similar amendment be moved on any future occasion, I would not feel myself bound by the ruling which I made yesterday.

The amendment moved at that time by the hon. member for Prince Albert was as follows:

That bill No. 7 be not now read the third time but that it be referred back to the committee of the whole for the purpose of reconsidering an addition to section 2, subsection (1), to provide that in no case shall such compensation be less than the economic value of the animal or animals at the time the said disease was diagnosed.

The financial resolution which preceded this bill was as follows:

That it is expedient to introduce a measure to authorize contributions to be paid out of the consolidated revenue fund to provinces in respect of costs incurred by them in providing insured hospital and diagnostic services pursuant to provincial law and to agreements made in accordance with the said measure, to commence when at least six provinces containing at least half the population of Canada, have entered into such agreements and qualified for the receipt of such contributions.