

### Health Care

As the first lot was unable to agree, the matter will be referred to the provincial premiers, who will agree no better. Like the premier of Quebec, when they return from some conference where they achieved absolutely nothing, they claim to be satisfied and even say so on television programs. This, of course, is to disguise the party's failure, as citizens are inevitably the victims. I continue quoting:

This dramatic development came about at a time when there were indications, at least according to federal spokesmen, of provincial interest in the federal proposals. But it is now clear that that optimism was forced and that, on the contrary, the provinces demanded a higher degree of flexibility in the fields under their constitutional jurisdiction.

This failure is even more serious for the federal government especially as the minister of Health and Welfare, Mr. Marc Lalonde, had succeeded, a fortnight ago, in obtaining the unanimous approval of the provinces concerning the objectives of his program to review the social security system.

Some approval! How happy Mr. Castonguay said he was, in Quebec, upon his return from Ottawa when he said that at last there had been an agreement. And how! He has left the entire administration to the federal government. Incidentally, with regard to family allowances, that is what we want. That is what the country wants. If the family allowances system is turned over to the jurisdiction of the federal government, then let it take it over 100 per cent and then one will be able to say whether they administer it well or bad, but, let no one say that 40 per cent of the administration will be left to the federal government and 60 per cent to the provincial government or vice versa. Once again, those particulars should be determined clearly, to avoid quarrels.

To go back to my quotation:

The fact that the dual question of health care and postsecondary education has been referred to the government leaders themselves is a clear indication that relations between Ottawa and the provinces are not at their best.

Generally, the provinces want the federal government to move out of a vast field of taxation to let the provincial governments to finance their own particular programs without having to beg endlessly and remain in a state of dependence upon the central government.

For that, the provinces and ourselves blame the federal government.

Before leaving, the provincial minister of Finance, Mr. Raymond Garneau, stated that if Quebec had accepted the federal proposals on financing postsecondary education, it would have lost several million dollars.

As for the financing of health care, Mr. Garneau finds the Turner formula too complex and not generous enough. Instead of the 28 tax points Quebec demanded, Ottawa offers only six—

And the Minister of National Health and Welfare (Mr. Lalonde) spoke a while ago of \$1,100 million.

It is nice to talk about an increase of one billion one hundred million dollars over a period of six years, but if, for example, Quebec's expenditures for hospital services were to double, what would this billion be worth? This is very relative. If I am offered a billion tomorrow I would be crazy to refuse it, but we must think in the long term. With regard to the future expenditures of a province, what is this billion worth? It may be worth a trifle and this is why we are not ready to accept such amounts without first knowing, Mr. Speaker, if expenditures will rise or fall.

[Mr. Gauthier (Roberval).]

It is obvious that in the present situation—and I could mention six other items, but I will be satisfied with one—we suggest that the government accept the *status quo*, i.e. what was paid formerly to the provinces, because we must live in this upside down federalism; let us accept the formula of paying in equal parts the expenses of the provinces. This first proposal was much more equitable; by accepting to pay half of the expenses of the provinces, if the expenses increase, it is understood that the payments of the federal government will increase because, after all, it is the role of the federal government. It merely collects taxes to transfer them to the provinces. This is not funny, but it should play that role. Today, it benefits from its situation as collector to impose its will, to become a dictator, and this is why we would prefer the equal share formula for some time while waiting for a true revival of Confederation. We are now living with dictatorial federalism. If we come to a true revival of Confederation, the provinces will have something to say. They will then determine together the activities of the federal government in our country, as was done 40 or 50 years ago. At least, under the equal share formula, the provinces had or still have something to say. They can choose the quality of medical care and improve them and they are always assured that the central government will have to supply its share. In a word, they can still prepare their budget in accordance with the needs of the population instead of gearing health services to the amount that Ottawa will be kind enough to give them. The federal government could withdraw completely from such provincial fields as health and education. Let it withdraw completely and leave it entirely to the provinces—

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Laniel):** Order. I regret to have to interrupt the hon. member but the time allotted to him is now expired.

● (1450)

[English]

**Mr. B. Keith Penner (Thunder Bay):** Mr. Speaker, it has come to my attention that there are quite a number of members who wish to participate in this debate. If there is agreement from all sides of the House, perhaps the suggestion could be accepted that henceforth there be a 15 minute limit on speeches, which would enable all members to have an opportunity of speaking before we adjourn for the weekend.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Laniel):** Hon. members have heard the suggestion. Is that agreed?

**Some hon. Members:** Agreed.

**Mr. Penner:** Mr. Speaker, as an elected representative from one of the slow growth, developing regions of this country I should like to make a brief contribution to this debate and to express some of the concerns of those I represent. The tone of my arguments will be in direct contradistinction to the hon. member who has just spoken, particularly with reference to the role of the federal government in the health care field.

Any consideration of health care in Canada must, of course, include reference to the quality and extent of service and the cost of all aspects of any comprehensive