

Income Tax Act

the 40-year gestation period of this legislation and, of course, we all saw last year the birth of this sickly child, the Hospital Insurance and Diagnostic Services Act.

This was a child which should have been given every encouragement. It was a child which needed every encouragement if it was ever to grow up strong and healthy. This bill certainly provides no such encouragement. On the contrary, it tends to sentence this hospital insurance scheme to years of sickness and possibly even to death from malnutrition. We realize that the insurance companies have fought this legislation ever since it was first suggested, and we feel that certain of the amendments in this bill might very well have been written by some of these insurance companies. We feel they lean very heavily in their favour.

We feel that the bill penalizes those provinces which were progressive enough to take part in the hospitalization scheme. We feel that it penalizes the people who live in those provinces. In short, we feel that it is unfair and discriminatory; and, holding this view, I move, seconded by the hon. member for Burnaby-Coquitlam (Mr. Regier):

That Bill No. C-48 be not now read the third time but that the said bill be referred back to the committee of the whole for the purpose of reconsidering clause 8 thereof.

Mr. Fleming (Eglinton): Mr. Speaker, may I speak for a moment on a point of order. It is of course competent for a member to move on third reading that a bill be referred back for the purpose of amending a clause, but according to my understanding the proposed amendment to the clause indicated must form part of the motion. This particular amendment does not have that effect at all. It simply says in general terms that the bill should be referred back for the purpose of reconsidering clause 8 thereof.

Mr. Speaker: I will give some consideration to that point while the debate on third reading is proceeding.

Mr. Erhart Regier (Burnaby-Coquitlam): Before I make the remarks I wish to make on this subject I should like to call your attention, Mr. Speaker, to section 418 of Beauchesne's fourth edition, where it is stated:

The question for the third reading is put immediately after the report from the committee of the whole. All amendments which may be moved on a second reading of a bill may be moved on the third reading with the restriction that they cannot deal with any matter which is not contained in the bill.

I believe the motion submitted by the hon. member for Timmins (Mr. Martin) has followed the prescribed form.

[Mr. Martin (Timmins).]

I was pleased to hear the hon. member for Timmins make this motion, because I feel the house has not given sufficient consideration to the discriminatory effect of clause 8. As the hon. member for Timmins indicated, our new national hospital insurance venture ought to be nursed along rather than have obstacles thrown into its path which will hinder its normal growth and acceptance by more and more of our Canadian people. I regret very much that a large number of our people—I believe some 30 or 40 per cent—are not yet in a province whose government has decided to make an agreement with the federal government under which its citizens would have the blessings of a national insurance plan.

I feel that this clause 8 as it now stands is a slap in the face to the progressively-minded people of Canada. It certainly offers no inducement or encouragement to other provinces of Canada to enter the plan at this time. One of the attractions of the plan in days gone by was that if there was illness in a family some compensation was obtained, in that payments made on a family's behalf were deductible for income tax purposes. I feel that the people of Saskatchewan, the people of Alberta, the people of Ontario and the people of one or two other provinces are not going to look with much favour upon clause 8. I believe they will form the opinion that this is one more instance of the Conservatives taking one view when they were in opposition and quite a different view and course of action once they are in office and faced with the responsibility of government.

Hon. Paul Martin (Essex East): Mr. Speaker, I just want to say briefly that this amendment should surely appeal to the Minister of Finance, particularly in view of the position he took when these matters were discussed when we were on the other side and had the happy responsibility of presenting to this house the Hospital Insurance and Diagnostic Services Act.

This measure has now been accepted by practically all the provinces of Canada. There are still two to signify their intention of participating. It is hoped that the government is taking steps to persuade the province of Quebec, the second largest province of Canada, to enter into this worthwhile scheme.

As the hon. member for Kenora-Rainy River said when speaking at the resolution stage, it is regrettable that the government, particularly at this initial period, should jeopardize the happy circumstances in which this great hospital insurance plan has been inaugurated by a measure of this sort. The minister has not given sufficient justification for this course, which I believe at this stage in the early