

mass of the Canadian people, the ninety-five per cent for whom the bill is to be framed—it is not going to be for the wealthy people, or the professional men—should be represented if the bill is to be for their benefit. Let the bill be framed with the best advice possible from all those classes.

I do not know that there is anything further I can add. I did not intend to speak for more than ten minutes, and I see I have gone a minute or two over that. I say in conclusion to the Prime Minister that any national health insurance bill comparable with the British measure, improved if possible to suit our Canadian conditions, will benefit the great mass of Canadians, not only the workers in the factories but the farmers in the outlying parts, among whom I saw too frequently during my trips great distress and the impossibility of getting medical attention. I am convinced that the Prime Minister has it in his heart to bring in the best bill possible. I say, do so, and he will have my support.

Mr. F. D. SHAW (Red Deer): My participation in this debate at this time is not designed to delay the passing of the resolution. However, I should like to make one or two observations.

It was apparent that the announcement of the proposal to set up a forty-one man committee to examine into all phases of social security aroused widespread interest in this country and a great deal of editorial comment. In connection with the editorial comment I should like to refer to a statement made by the Prime Minister (Mr. Mackenzie King) yesterday, as reported at page 937 of *Hansard*. He said:

When the Atlantic charter was proclaimed it met with universal acceptance in this country. I have yet to find a newspaper in Canada which had not a good word to say for the Atlantic charter.

Further on he said:

I find that to-day some are inclined to belittle, at least, the idea of social security, as being something vague and general, something that will involve outlays greater than any country can meet, and the like.

This is the point I wish to make in that connection. I can agree with the Prime Minister that the declaration known as the Atlantic charter did meet with widespread approval. But when we agree with the aims and objects laid down in the Atlantic charter that does not necessarily mean that we are obliged to accept all measures or suggestions designed to attain the objects laid down in the charter, advanced by this or any other government. While we agree on objectives we

must retain at all times the right to criticize any proposal advanced by anyone which is designed or stated to accomplish the results that we desire.

In this connection may I say it is strange how quickly people make up their minds respecting certain matters without having given complete consideration to them. I recall that when the Beveridge report was announced the press took sides immediately, without reading it, without examining it. I am not criticizing them for doing so more than I am criticizing members of this house for having done the same. Ten minutes after the press and the radio announced that his report had been submitted to the British government, we found people across this country ready to fight if you criticized it and others ready to fight if you supported it. Was that not also true when the Sirois report was made known in this country? I know that boards of trade, town and city councils, held meetings and voted unanimously to support the Sirois recommendations, when in certain instances not a member had ever seen a copy of it. I know from personal experience in my part of the country that they sent to Edmonton or Calgary for a Liberal politician to come and tell them what the Sirois report recommended. I got into communication with some members of these boards of trade, carrying the printed document under my arm, three red books, and asked these gentlemen and others if they had seen those books. In no case could I find anyone who recognized them from the back, and very few who recognized them when I turned them around.

Let me deal with the plebiscite in the same connection. We found people in this country inspired by certain politicians who immediately, without having first given the matter proper consideration, formed a decision as to whether they would or would not support the plebiscite. They were encouraged by politicians to do that. I know of one politician who, meeting someone, would say, Are you going to vote "yes" on the plebiscite or are you going to be subversive and vote "no"? I think it is time that we should make a declaration as to whether this is a democracy; whether I have a right to think as I see fit; whether I have a right to speak as I see fit, of course having due regard for the rights of others and the safety of the state; whether I have a right to act as I please, within the same limitations. But there is a vicious type of propaganda which is going around this country at the present time, and which has been going around since the outbreak of the war, leading the average man to believe that unless he agrees with the government he is