

*Medicare*

The Prime Minister sat attentively in his seat and when Mr. MacEachen had finished, nodded his approval with a smile and left the chamber.

Mr. Marchand, who followed every word with equal attention was also happy. From the gallery above one could almost see the five other ministers present also heave sighs of relief that another cabinet crisis was apparently over.

But backbench M.P.'s who were in the know of what really happened, were wondering what Mitchell Sharp was thinking as he sat somewhere beyond the confines of the house.

If there was a victory for anyone, the odds were on the side of Mr. MacEachen and Mr. Marchand—not on the side of Mr. Sharp as the stories that were circulated around the Liberal conference had implied.

The implication here is that the majority of the people at the Liberal convention were on the side of the Minister of Finance and the inference that there has been a real battle going on between that minister and the Minister of National Health and Welfare is probably quite factual. Now we have this medicare legislation before us, and the government has taken the position that it has to watch the economy. The Minister of Finance says it is being delayed to slow down the boom, and out of the other cheek tells us that when economic conditions are better they will introduce medicare not later than July 1, 1968.

One wonders what goes on with this government when it wants to rush this legislation through, legislation that actually means nothing unless it is implemented. Just the other day a question was ruled out of order when a member asked about the 12 mile territorial limit. It was ruled out on the basis that it was asking for a policy statement. That was not the case. Legislation to establish a 12 mile limit was rushed through by the government two years ago, but has never been enforced.

At that time we had what was referred to as the Pearson gunboat philosophy, and we may have been able to exercise that gunboat philosophy if it were not for the fact that we have a Minister of National Defence (Mr. Hellyer) who has stripped our gunboats. But possibly we can now depend on the fact that just today President Johnson signed a bill to invoke a 12 mile limit in the United States. Who knows, the Minister of National Defence may now go to the United States for the necessary equipment to implement the gunboat philosophy.

This legislation has been rushed into the house, despite appeals from this side that at first there should be at least a pilot project.

In the past the Minister of National Health and Welfare said it would only cost \$40 million to put medicare into effect for the latter part of 1967.

The latest word I heard from the Canadian Medical Association over T.V. last night was that they want medicare for people who cannot afford to pay doctors' fees. They also made it quite clear to the minister that if he puts the over-all plan into effect there is not sufficient medical personnel to implement it. I ask, why cannot the government agree to make medicare available now to those who need it, since the doctors say they cannot possibly service the whole program if it is put into effect immediately? They will not even be able to service it should the Liberals finally get around to keeping one promise, and we do have medicare implemented by 1968.

Again, Mr. Speaker, I say it is my hope that "Mac" will win another battle concerning the health and welfare of the miners in Cape Breton. Despite the interpretation of a few people that he has this time won a victory, when the minister gets on his feet to wind up this debate I hope he will explain for me, because I cannot understand it, how anybody can say people gained a victory out of a broken promise.

No matter how you look at it, Mr. Speaker, this government stands condemned regardless of how you examine their position and regardless of the arguments of the Minister of Finance. This still constitutes a broken promise, and the Minister of Finance has led the way in breaking it. What is most discouraging to me as a Nova Scotian is the fact that the Minister of National Health and Welfare, a Nova Scotian himself who should be fully aware of the implications of this particular program, has given formal approval to breaking that promise.

To test the attitudes of the government all one needs to do is quote the words of the Minister of Transport (Mr. Pickersgill). On September 1 in this house he turned right to the Prime Minister and said, "The Prime Minister as usual will have to backtrack." Those were the words of the Minister of Transport spoken directly into the face of the Prime Minister. With the Prime Minister backtracking it has become a simple matter for the government to break promises from which it elicited considerable mileage during election campaigns, and I cannot see how broken promises mean a victory.