

*Medicare*

However, having said that, although it may not be in the form in which I would like to see it, it would be neither right nor proper for me to oppose the bill because it is a most meaningful Canadian step.

I should like to close by once again imploring the minister to find some further occasion, if at all possible, this week, to discuss with our minister of health, our attorney general and our premier the very real economic hardships which this is going to place on the province of Nova Scotia. Thank you, Mr. Speaker.

**Mr. D. R. Gundlock (Lethbridge):** Mr. Speaker, this afternoon I had thought of this matter of medicare as a socialist measure, and I was particularly impressed by the fact that those in the house who are supposed to be the proponents of socialism, the members of the New Democratic Party, were completely absent from the house.

If I may, Mr. Speaker, I should like to make one last plea. In the house and publicly I have mentioned some of the things which bother me particularly about this bill. I have said I would support the bill with almost any amendment. I heard the Minister of Finance (Mr. Sharp) say in the house that the measure would have to be postponed for a year or two because the country could not afford to bring it in at this moment. Just what are we affording? We are looking at it economically, I suppose, from the viewpoint of the Minister of Finance. We probably are looking at it politically from the viewpoint of the Minister of National Health and Welfare (Mr. MacEachen); and, looking at it in this light, it might well be called not medicare but "politicare".

As I said before, the introduction of this measure seemed to be a matter of political expediency. This is not what we should be talking about; this is not what we should be thinking about when we are discussing medicare. I hope the minister will give second thought to this bill during the two years it will take before it comes into effect. I do not know why we should push a bill through which cannot come into effect until certain ministers arrive at an agreement. Surely there are other urgent and important matters that we should consider.

• (6:30 p.m.)

Let me plead with the minister, and challenge him if need be, to investigate thoroughly the results of similar plans put into effect in other countries. I do not pose as an expert,

[Mr. Forrestall.]

but it is my feeling that a committee should be constituted to study the experiences of these other countries.

What we are supposed to be talking about is the health and welfare of the Canadian public, but I have heard very few words about this subject during the present debate. We have admitted that we cannot at this time afford to implement such a plan, but we must in some way ensure that the Canadian public has every advantage so far as health and welfare is concerned. We all remember the bitter experience we had in financing our pension plan. I was in support of that plan and voted for it, but only after I made a plea to the minister to reconsider the proposed method of financing.

Let me now make a plea to the minister to consider the essence of this bill and to avoid pushing it through on the basis of political expediency. We should consider the health and welfare of the Canadian people on a purely medical basis rather than on political or economic considerations.

In view of the fact I am not an expert in this field, I have had to read history to find out what has happened in the past. I came across a very disturbing article in a medical journal *Lancet* under the title "Crumbling Edifice". It refers to things that happened 100 years ago, and in fact goes back to the time of Bismark who first introduced public medicine in Germany. At that time Germany was foremost in laboratory research. Unfortunately, however, she did not maintain that position following the rise to power of Hitler. Before that era she was considered the world's most progressive country in the field of laboratory research, while at the same time England was outstanding in clinical research.

All medical men in the world I am sure look up to Dr. Osler, whose dream was to bring together the Anglo and Teutonic views in respect of medicine. He wanted to bring together the best laboratory and clinical approach to research and care. Had he been successful I am sure the health problems of the whole world would have been greatly alleviated.

Perhaps I should make some mention of the efforts of Marx in Russia. What has happened to these great plans in these countries? The proposed union was never accomplished. Russia no longer can be viewed as an outstanding example in the field of socialized medicine, and Germany has lost its place in the world in this field. No longer are England