

*Supply*

**Hon. Perrin Beatty (Minister of National Health and Welfare):** Mr. Speaker, I welcome the opportunity to turn the tables and to be able to be the one posing the question to my hon. friend for a minute or two.

I have two questions for my hon. friend. I listened with a great deal of interest to his call for members on all sides of the House to support the motion. One assumes that was a sincere call. I want to ask the hon. member these two questions.

Is the hon. member aware of the fact that the motion he has placed today asking for support for medicare is put in the guise of an Opposition Day votable motion which, if passed, would be a motion of non-confidence in the government?

Second, is the hon. member aware of a single instance or can he cite a single instance where such motions have been treated in any other way other than as a motion of non-confidence?

**Mr. Pagtakhan:** Mr. Speaker, I must admit that I am not a person esteemed in procedural rules. However, we should go beyond the procedures and go to the substance of the motion.

To the specific question of whether it will be a non-confidence motion, I would leave it to the experts on rules. I would like this government to make its commitment during debate that in fact it is committed to medicare, that it will restore funding for medicare, that it will prevent the "Americanization of Medicare" as published by Frances Russell in *Canadian Forum*, and that it will prevent Ontario from potentially looking at user fees when Ontario says it will copy Quebec's new health plan. We do not know.

I would like the government to be concerned. In this week's issue of *Medical Post* the headline is: "Medicare Murdered". In this weekend's issue of the *Free Press* one focus article reads: "Budget may spell the death of medicare".

Without going to the refinements of procedure, I would really like to tell the minister that I offer this as a sincere motion. That is why I saw to it that we introduced the motion in a positive way.

I believe it is a non-partisan issue. I believe it is an issue for all Canadians. This House must support this

motion if each member and each political party truly believes that we are committed to the continuing life of medicare.

**Mr. Beatty:** Mr. Speaker, let us get greater precision from the hon. member as to what he is expecting today. The hon. member cannot cite a single instance when a votable Opposition Day motion has been treated as anything other than a vote of non-confidence in the government, which would have the effect if the motion were to pass of requiring the government to resign.

Does the hon. member seriously expect that any government could support a motion like that, knowing it is treated as a vote of non-confidence? Again, can he cite a single instance where his party, when in power, treated Opposition Day motions which stem from the old motions of non-confidence in any other way? How can he be expected to be taken seriously when he calls on members on this side of the House to support a motion of non-confidence in the government?

**Mr. Pagtakhan:** Mr. Speaker, I think this side of the House and all Canadians are truly disappointed with this government because it is treating medicare with disdain. It is trying to kill medicare. By the year 2014, if we continue with the current trend of funding, medicare will be dead. It will be earlier in Quebec. It is estimated to be in the year 1995-96.

To the specific question of the minister—and I have the highest respect for the minister whom I have always held in high esteem—this motion has been carefully thought through and considered. We certainly would like the government to come to its knees and defend itself.

• (1140)

When we have listened to all the debating points, we will see. I challenge the government. Perhaps it is time we declare openly we have no confidence in this government because it is trying to kill medicare.

**Mr. Jim Karpoff (Surrey North):** Mr. Speaker, I am quite fascinated by this whole motion put forward by the Liberals.

I must say that for once I agree with the minister. There is no question that this motion is being put forward facetiously by the Liberals in the hope that the government will vote against it.