



In April 2000, Albertans Stood Up For Medicare



...unless those of us who believe in Medicare raise our voices in no uncertain terms, unless we arouse our neighbours and our friends and our communities, we are sounding the death knell of Medicare in this country, and I for one will not sit idly by and see that happen.

Tommy Douglas

Throughout the 1990s, the Alberta Conservative government made numerous attempts to privatize Alberta's health care system. In April 2000, it began its latest and most aggressive attempt by introducing Bill 11, The Alberta Healthcare Protection Act, which proposed to legalize private hospitals. Under the leadership of the Alberta Federation of Labour (AFL) and Friends of Medicare, an informal coalition of labour, community and social justice groups came together to oppose the government's plans and support universal health care. Huge rallies were held night after night at the Legislature. Albertans from across the province joined in the protests, particularly in response to Premier Klein's attempts to silence the opposition by locking the Legislature's doors and labeling all those who opposed him as 'left wing nuts.' The protests culminated in massive rallies in Edmonton and Calgary that drew more than 15,000 people. The opposition succeeded in significantly diluting the impact of Bill 11 when the government removed its most offensive sections. As important, public opposition to Bill 11 demonstrated the depth of commitment Albertans have for Medicare.

The Alberta Federation of Labour's Centennial:
A Century of Struggle and Solidarity



Poster 2 in "The Making of Our Movement" series
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