

Federal-Provincial Fiscal Arrangements Act

and very badly handled in many areas of the country. It is extremely important that home nursing programs be permitted to grow and expand as that need is required. It allows elderly people to live in their homes, to maintain the kind of life that they had had in the past into senior years. Yet, with short-term, shortsighted approaches that the Government of British Columbia has put in place, and that this Government in Ottawa would emulate by its cut-backs in funding, those home care programs will force the elderly out of their own homes and force them into institutional care at a very high cost. We have to stop that trend with forward thinking and new approaches to health care which will require some serious initial investment to realize the savings down the road.

While on the subject of dignity and proper care for senior citizens there are many senior citizens who can maintain an independent existence, with an increment of care provided to them. This federal Government should be making investments in that kind of independent care preventing the full institutional care of people by providing intermediate care facilities with access to some nursing assistance. That type of positive program which would give senior citizens a better quality of life has been chopped in British Columbia, and the kind of action taken by the Mulroney Government in cut-backs to health care funding is certainly going to create that shortsighted and very harsh system in Canada today.

I am extremely disappointed, as are many people in this country, that these cut-backs in funding are going to mean great difficulty for people, especially senior citizens. They emulate the kind of very negative health care program afoot in British Columbia.

Then we have the extended care facilities. There are many extended care facilities in which the staff and the people in those facilities with limited resources are doing a magnificent job, a job that is extremely difficult. Senior citizens there are getting the best care available. The attitude of the Government in British Columbia toward building sufficient extended care facilities for those senior citizens is extremely negative. The British Columbia Government sees that as an area of cut-back, an area of limited funding. We have the Premier of British Columbia, Mr. Bennett, congratulating the Prime Minister of Canada for his attempt to cut back funding of the health care system.

As the average age of this population increases, there is going to be a greater need for funding for senior citizens, for funding in the intermediate care area, for funding in the extended care area, and we should be looking toward providing a partnership in that funding, not just to the very narrow limits to which this Bill addresses itself, and certainly not to the cut-back in the level of health care increases that the Prime Minister of Canada and the Conservative Government envision.

This is a very serious matter. The senior citizens of Canada have been badly treated by this particular Government in the suggested cut-backs to the old age pension. The situation of retired members of the Armed Forces has been badly handled

by this Government in its cut-backs to unemployment insurance that are extremely important in making the adjustment from active wage earners to an age of retirement. This Government has not paid adequate, fair, and decent attention to the senior citizens of this country. No more clearly is it illustrated than in this particular area of cut-backs in health care.

Senior citizens are not the only ones who are very badly treated. So are Canadians who live in remote areas of this country, who are involved in resource extraction, who provide the factories of this country and the major centres with the raw materials they need. In many cases these people do not have medical doctors. In many cases they do not have nursing facilities. They depend on air ambulances. They depend on clinics that are seeing funding cut at this point in time. Clinics in those areas are saying they can no longer provide service at a level you would expect because the federal Government is reneging on cost-sharing. It would be my hope that Conservative Members of Parliament on the government side would be prepared to put this legislation down as extremely unfair, as inequitable for Canadians, and would see a full and fair partnership in the sharing of health costs in this country.

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Don Boudria (Glengarry—Prescott—Russell): Mr. Speaker, I want to thank my Conservative colleagues across for their warm reception and applause as I commence my remarks this afternoon on Bill C-96.

[Translation]

Mr. Speaker, as you know, many Members of this House are very disappointed in Bill C-96. As far as I am concerned, Mr. Speaker, this is my third speech on this Bill—

Mr. Vincent: And that's enough.

Mr. Boudria:—and the Hon. Member opposite says that's enough, Mr. Speaker. That is interesting. Am I to conclude that the Hon. Member agrees the Conservative Government is making a mistake with this Bill? And considering the fact that—

Mr. Vincent: Mr. Speaker, the Hon. Member for Glengarry—Prescott—Russell (Mr. Boudria) is putting words in my mouth which are in fact the exact opposite of what I think. I wish he would stop these insinuations, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Boudria: Mr. Speaker, as you may have noticed, this was not a point of order. It wasn't even a good argument. It was a very weak defence to support the indefensible, namely Bill C-96.

Mr. Speaker, this Bill is a very slim document, as you may have noticed. And it also has very little to offer the various provincial governments of our country.

Mr. Speaker, if you think for one minute that I am being partisan, which is definitely not the case, but if you do, let me