

S. O. 31

INTEREST RATES

Mr. Guy Saint-Julien (Abitibi): Mr. Speaker, let us take a look at what the interest rates have been since 1979. The rate was 13 percent in September 1979; 12.5 percent on August 25, 1980; 22.75 percent on August 7, 1981; 16 percent on August 20, 1982; 13 percent on August 10, 1984; 10.25 percent on August 23, 1985; 9.75 percent on July 18, 1986; 10 percent on July 31, 1987; 11.25 percent on August 26, 1988; 14.25 percent on August, 1990. And now, Mr. Speaker, it is down to 9.22 percent.

* * *

[English]

CANADA HEALTH ACT

Mr. Jim Karpoff (Surrey North): Mr. Speaker, the western finance ministers have issued a report that calls for the dismantling of our national medicare program. The report demands that the federal government stop all cash payments for health and instead transfer tax points to the provinces.

The report sets out new program criteria such as affordability, efficiency, flexibility and abandons the Canada Health Act standards, public administration, comprehensiveness, universality, portability and accessibility.

Medicare is one of Canada's most treasured programs that holds this country together. I call upon the new minister of health, in the name of national unity, to state clearly that his government is committed to a national medicare program including federal funding and national standards.

* * *

NEW DEMOCRATIC PARTY

Mr. Felix Holtmann (Portage—Interlake): Mr. Speaker, for some time this House has been treated to the featured corporate welfare bum of the month by the member for Nickel Belt.

Which NDP premier did not have the guts to tax the so-called corporate welfare bum pronounced by the member for Nickel Belt?

Whose NDP deficit is now \$10 billion?

An hon. member Bob Rae.

Mr. Holtmann Which NDP premier increased his deficit by 300 per cent in one year?

Some hon. members Bob Rae.

Mr. Holtmann Which NDP deficit amounts to \$1,000 per person in this province?

An hon. member: Bob Rae.

Mr. Holtmann Whose NDP economics on a federal scale would create a \$90 billion federal deficit?

An hon. member: Bob Rae.

Mr. Holtmann Who is spending like a drunken sailor today so that our children can pay his bills tomorrow?

Some hon. members: Bob Rae.

Mr. Holtmann Therefore, is the NDP premier from Ontario, Bob Rae, not eligible for the political welfare bum of the month?

* * *

THE LATE MICHAEL B. KIRBY

Mr. Speaker: It is my sad duty to advise the House of the untimely death on April 23, 1991 of Michael B. Kirby, one of our table officers since 1979. A parliamentary employee for 25 years, Michael died of cancer after a short illness at the age of 51.

Most of us at one time or another have turned to Michael for procedural advice, for interpretation of the Standing Orders, or for information about precedent and practice. His counsel was always wise and thoughtful and usually given with a refreshing mix of Irish wit and charm. He was often seen standing beside the Chair offering your Speaker advice or guidance and he loved as well to recount stories.

A particular favourite of his, was the incident where a noted British Speaker was presiding over a particularly heated procedural row in the Chamber and sent a note to the clerk asking for advice. And, as Michael said it, the clerk sent a note back which said: "If I were you, Mr. Speaker, I should proceed with caution".

[Translation]

Mr. Kirby was a man of sound advice and it was at their own risk that Chairmen would ignore his advice. His dedication and loyalty to Parliament were unequivocal and were always evident in all the functions he performed, be it as committee clerk, head of Journals Directorate, principal clerk at the Table Research