

*Oral Questions*

Also, under the federal Income Tax Act, there is not a differential between the subsurface and surface use of flow-through shares to provide for exploration initiatives. The hon. member should also know that the federal income tax rules require that only 50 per cent of the exploration expenses be financed through flow-through shares in order to allow flow-through shares to be used for exploration.

As to the establishment of a Canada account, I am sure he would catch the interest of the Minister of Finance. I would be pleased to have discussions with the member for Abitibi and my colleague, the Minister of Finance.

\* \* \*

**HEALTH CARE**

**Mr. Brian L. Gardiner (Prince George—Bulkley Valley):** Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of National Health and Welfare.

Is the minister aware that doctors and medical specialists in Prince George and other communities in British Columbia have opted out of medicare and are charging fees to patients? That is extra billing by any other name.

If the minister is aware of this situation, can he tell the House whether his department has been consulting with the B.C. government on this situation to try to determine any future action either government might be able to take on this situation?

**Hon. Benoît Bouchard (Minister of National Health and Welfare):** Mr. Speaker, it is a very good question. We are actually in touch with the Government of British Columbia to ascertain the exact story of extra billing in that province. My hon. friend knows very well that the Canada Health Act does not allow extra billing by the provinces or doctors.

I repeat that we are in touch with the province. If there is any problem, we will act accordingly.

**Mr. Brian L. Gardiner (Prince George—Bulkley Valley):** Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the minister's answer. Examples have been prepared out of Prince George and other communities where some medical practitioners are asking for additional fees up front from patients. I will provide that information to the minister.

I would like to know what specific measures or action the government might have at its disposal in consultation with the minister of health in British Columbia to try to end these practices.

**Hon. Benoît Bouchard (Minister of National Health and Welfare):** Mr. Speaker, the very short answer is that I will enforce the Canada Health Act, dollar for dollar.

In other words, it is known that we transfer money to the provinces with regard to dollars accepted by the Canada Health Act. If there is any extra billing in the province of British Columbia in collaboration with the province itself, we will make sure it cannot happen any more.

\* \* \*

**TRANSPORTATION**

**Mr. Bill Casey (Cumberland—Colchester):** Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Transport. Yesterday I got a great answer from the Minister of State for Agriculture about the feed freight assistance program. I hope the same happens today.

The Atlantic Provinces Transportation Commission has made a presentation to the Department of Transport about a far more equitable and fair formula for the maritime freight rate reduction.

I wonder if the minister could give us some good news on that. Will he consider that plan and accept it?

**Hon. Jean Corbeil (Minister of Transport):** Mr. Speaker, as the hon. member knows, we have been working with the Atlantic Provinces Transportation Commission to try to arrive at a consensus.

Thanks to his own involvement and that of his colleagues, I am happy to report today that we have come to a consensus of reducing the subsidy on the basic west-bound portion of the agreement, eliminating the subsidy on used household goods and scrap materials and reducing the intraregional subsidies by 10 per cent. I think this is good news for everyone concerned.

\* \* \*

**SMALL BUSINESSES**

**Mr. Dennis Mills (Broadview—Greenwood):** Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Finance.