

drive people and businesses out of the province and its revenue position would be worse. It pointed out that health care was extremely important, yet there was literally not a nickel left in the system to pay for it.

It was pointed out as well that the Newfoundland health care system had been cut to the bone. It was as lean as it could possibly be. Any further cuts would mean that it could not adequately deliver services to the people. Staff had been cut, capital purchases had been cut, and it could not be cut any more and still be called a health care system.

The point was made very effectively that citizens of Newfoundland are also citizens of Canada and have a right to a decent health care system. The federal Government has no right to renege on its obligation towards an equitable sharing of the costs. When the Prime Minister of Canada, at the First Ministers' Conference in Halifax, said we are not cutting funding to the health care system, he was absolutely wrong.

The Newfoundland Government came up with a number of suggestions in the Green Paper. It considered revenue increases but rejected them. It examined a further cutting of the system and said that this was not possible. It examined the question of privatizing the health care system, turning it over to the private sector. That suggestion, of course, would lead us down the road to disaster. If that is a solution for Newfoundland today, it would be a solution for British Columbia or Saskatchewan tomorrow. Yet the privatizing of the health care system is being promoted by this Government. It is an absolutely wrong direction in which to go and will of course give us a two-tier system such as they have in the U.S.

Many years ago Norman Bethune, who contracted tuberculosis but had enough money in his family to obtain expensive treatment in a sanatorium, said, after being cured, that he was one of the fortunate ones at that time because there are really two types of tuberculosis in Canada. There is tuberculosis for the rich; you pay money and are cured. Then there is tuberculosis for the poor; you have no money and you die. That is the ultimate end of a two-tier health care system. If you cannot afford to buy private health care insurance, if you cannot afford to pay for extra billing, if you cannot afford to pay user fees, you do not make it.

Newfoundland asks this question. Is this a legitimate way for the Conservative Government of Canada to go? Does it want to renege on its share of the cost of an adequate health care system? Is it only prepared to pay a 2 per cent increase in the cost of health care when costs are increasing at a rate of 7 per cent? That 5 per cent shortfall will mean that a province like Newfoundland will have to turn to other sources or a two-tier system. This is an extremely serious matter and it is my hope that members of the Conservative Party will feel a responsibility to maintain the Government's commitment to give Canadians a decent, effective health care system such as they have had over the years.

Another thing that is very disturbing to me is that in my province Premier Bennett decided that the Prime Minister of

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Canada had found a very constructive way of saving the Government money by trimming the amount spent to preserve the health and dignity of all citizens of this country. I understand that the Premier of Saskatchewan, Mr. Devine, supported the Prime Minister as well. Yet no one else in this country would have taken such a completely irresponsible step. It is probably only in British Columbia, under a Social Credit Government, that education has been reduced to one of the lowest levels in this country. The removal of opportunities for young people has been so drastic in that province that parents are rising up and saying, "enough". That Government can no longer stay in power as long as it has that kind of attitude toward its citizens and that kind of attitude towards its future by depriving its most precious natural resource, its children, of an education. It is absolute and complete irresponsibility.

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Premier Bennett did not stop there in his support of the Conservative Government in Ottawa. He felt that even the health care system could be further gutted. The Bennett Government in British Columbia has made massive cut-backs in the health care system. It has cut back hospital spending. It has cut it back to the point where large wings of hospitals are now closed, where hospitals cannot acquire, over a number of years, equipment that is seriously needed. The B. C. Government has created a situation where important surgery is backlogged to the point where it cannot be done and people's lives have been placed in jeopardy.

This is the kind of leadership that has been coming out of the Province of British Columbia. This is the kind of support that the Prime Minister of Canada is getting for his proposed cut-backs in the health care system. Mr. Bennett, I assume, would see the Prime Minister turn around and create a health care system that looks like the one in British Columbia, which would be a disaster.

I assume that when the next election is called in British Columbia the people will rectify that. For people who are concerned about the future of their children and the future of the province, the ability to obtain decent health care will be a major item of concern.

It certainly is a hope of mine that this Government will reconsider its position on the proposed cut-backs to health care spending at the federal level. There are areas in the rapid growth of health care that really need to be addressed. There is a need for attention to senior citizens. There needs to be a serious expansion of prevention and education in health care where the federal Government would pay dollars today that would, in fact, save enormous amounts of money in the future by educating people in proper health care practices. The whole process of education and prevention would pay enormous dividends. If the proper investment were made in that area today we would see a reduction of health care costs in the future.

Another concern is the home care program for the elderly. This is something that has been chopped in British Columbia