

## S.O. 21

were forced to pay a head tax because they were Chinese. We cannot change past laws, but we can recognize—

**Mr. Speaker:** I regret to interrupt the Hon. Member, but her time has expired.

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## PORTS

## CALL FOR ESTABLISHMENT OF PORT OF HALIFAX CORPORATION

**Mr. Howard Crosby (Halifax West):** Mr. Speaker, in August of 1982 Parliament enacted a new law governing national ports. The Canada Ports Corporation Act was intended to decentralize the national authority over ocean port activity, and establish a measure of local autonomy in each national port which was judged self-sufficient or had the capacity to achieve self-sufficiency. To date only two national ports, Montreal and Vancouver, have been granted this special status. My concern is for the plight of our East Coast national ports, particularly the Port of Halifax, which desire and require local control. I urge the Minister of Transport (Mr. Axworthy) to establish a local corporation for the Port of Halifax.

At present port development is stymied by the lack of clear authority and direction. The new Fairview Cove Container Pier cannot service all the large container ships effectively, and ship owners might seek alternative port services. Action on expansion is overdue. The establishment of a local port corporation for the Port of Halifax should provide the impetus necessary to accomplish the expansion of Fairview Cove and other port developments.

At the same time a local corporation could diminish or even destroy the viability of the port. If the membership of the local board becomes a haven for defeated Liberal candidates and other Grit partisans, how can the interest of the port be advanced? The Port of Halifax demands a membership based on merit. Traditional port interests must be represented on the board, especially the marine labour force. The successful operation of national ports is essential to Canada. Let us make sure this viable Canadian industry develops and expands on both coasts.

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## MEDICAL CARE

## OPTING OUT BY PHYSICIANS—PROVINCIAL PRACTICES

**Mr. Stanley Hudecki (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of National Defence):** Mr. Speaker, considerable confusion exists as to the precise meaning of the term "opting out" in reference to medicare as it now exists in the various provinces. Generally the term "opting out" is applied to direct billing by the physician of a patient, rather than the billing by a doctor of the medicare program for the services rendered. This is the

underlying theme, but each province has its own variation of that theme.

In Ontario, Manitoba, Saskatchewan, and Newfoundland, to bill extra a physician must opt out of the plan and bill the patient directly. However, the patients are then reimbursed up to that portion of the fees allowed by medicare. In Alberta and New Brunswick physicians are not required to opt out of the provincial plan to extra bill, but the patient must be informed of the intention to extra bill. Similarly, in Prince Edward Island, Nova Scotia, and British Columbia no opting out is necessary for physicians to extra bill provided that the patient is notified and an agreement in writing is reached by the physician with the provincial commission. The physicians, in these six provinces can therefore collect their fees in part from the insurance system and in part from the patient.

In Quebec an opted out physician may either charge the patient directly within the provincial allotted fee, in which case the patient can then apply to be reimbursed from the medical system, or non participating physicians may bill the patient for any amount they choose over and above the provincial fee. The patient is not then eligible for reimbursement from the provincial plan.

These differences in provincial plans regarding the meaning of "opting out" must be understood to appreciate the complexity of portability of medicare as it now exists.

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## FINANCE

## RECOMMENDED REVISION OF CAPITAL GAINS TAX

**Mr. Arnold Malone (Crowfoot):** Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Finance (Mr. Lalonde) is preparing for a Budget he intends to table February 15. In an attempt to be helpful I would suggest that he make the following changes: capital gains tax should either be abolished or adjusted to discontinue inflation as gain.

The present system is unfair and amounts to double taxation. Its impact is to destroy the retirement potential of small business persons and greatly hinder their capacity to sell their businesses without first inflating the sale price.

Further, the tax on fuels used in business or production should be dropped or reduced. Two-thirds of the price of gasoline or diesel fuel is tax. Moreover, I would suggest that the Government ensure that there is no tax on natural gas fuels when such fuels are used for the manufacture of fertilizers.

Finally, I would appeal to the Government to allow for a full write-off of farm expenses for part-time farmers for the purpose of taxation, when it can be demonstrated that such persons intend to become full-time farmers.

● (1410)

These measures, if adopted, would significantly ease the burden on small businesses and farm producers and at the