

them at this point, it has to be borrowed money. It has to be borrowed money that has to be paid back.

If it was money from heaven, we would not have to pay it back, would we? Unfortunately, that only exists in the minds of the NDP. It does not have to take responsibility for balancing the books or being accountable to the taxpayers of Canada. Its members just have to stand up on their hind legs and howl at the moon.

Howl they might, thank goodness the NDP is not the party in power. If it was, we would not be saddled with a \$400 billion deficit in this country, we would be in a country that would have to be taken over by the IMF. Look at Ontario today, what it is doing there. Ontario is haemorrhaging because a socialist government cannot ring in expenses.

An hon. member: They are in better shape than you are.

• (1600)

Mr. Thompson: They can holler all they want on the other side of the House, Mr. Speaker, that particular party, because at the end of the day, nothing is going to change. They do not have to take responsibility for their words or their actions. They just have to talk about it and, as I say, get up on their hind legs and howl at the moon.

In the province of New Brunswick, particularly, I am supportive and encouraged with what this government has done for my home province; very encouraged. As I mentioned, that figure this year is going to be close to \$2 billion transferred to the people of New Brunswick to help them with their programs. It accounts for about 39 per cent of their revenues. That little have not province of New Brunswick is receiving about 70 per cent above the national average when you measure how those transfers take place. That is very significant.

If you measure it on an individual basis, the figure is up in the \$2,100 range per individual in the province of New Brunswick transferred government to government. That is not including other federal government programs that are transferred to the individual. If those were calculated into the equation, the number would be even greater, much greater, but we can save that argument for another day. Those types of programs we are talking about, of course, are UIC programs, again federal dollars, even

Government Orders

support to our seniors. Those are not factored into those numbers at all. Those are simply numbers transferring dollars from government to government.

The argument that they use is a fallacious argument. It bears no regard to reality at all. It has no semblance of reality at all because they have never had to be in a position of governing this country. Let us face it, Canada is not an easy country to govern because we do have these regional disparities within the country. We have always had a system of government in this country, a federal government, that has always responded to the needs of the poorer provinces. This government has responded to the needs of the poorer provinces.

Again, let us look at the real numbers. Let us not project a number that means absolutely nothing. Let us not project what might have been. Let us take a look at what has actually happened. In these provinces, there has been an annual increase in the have not provinces. Again, I zero in on New Brunswick, a 5.7 per cent increase since 1984-85. Incidentally, that is the year we took office, 1984-85. There has been an increase of that much every single year.

The difficulty the province of New Brunswick is finding today is simply this. It has allowed health care costs to escalate over 80 per cent in the province of New Brunswick and its transfers have only increased to the tune of 52 per cent over that time frame.

What it has done is allowed expenses to gallop ahead of the transfers. Now it has got to find someone to point the finger at, but the truth is it should have dealt with that four or five years ago and did not. Now, when the hard numbers are coming home, it has to find another group of people to blame it on. That group of people are the people who make up the Government of Canada.

The fact is there have been increases on average of 5.7 per cent to my home province of New Brunswick and that is significant. Compare with what they have done on the expenditure side and that is where they have lost the battle in the province of New Brunswick.

I am pleased with what this government has done in regard to transfers. As our economy continues to move ahead and, as we work through the recession, you can be assured we are going to take a closer look at what we can do for these provinces in the coming years.