

*Supply*

with the provinces, it hammers out agreements on questions like universality which have to be written into any kind of agreement. Public administration of health care is written into any agreements with the provinces as well.

That is what it comes down to in terms of governing the country, in using the spending clout, if you like, Mr. Speaker. I have suggested that maybe we could use a little more clout in some cases with the provinces which were not doing the proper kind of spending on health care that there should be.

I mentioned earlier about prevention. An ounce of prevention is worth a pound of cure. There is not a better way to spend money than ensuring that young people, particularly in schools, are guaranteed their health care.

With regard to health promotion, my colleague from Surrey has had to start a health watch, because we have to keep track of what the government members are doing to our health care system. Daily, we have reports from the different provinces about how they are, piecemeal, taking apart our health care system.

That is not the kind of health care system we want to have in this country. I would encourage the members opposite to really show their courage. I know that they will be called upon to do that at some point in the mandate of this government when they are called to go before the people again.

There could not be a better issue to get support from your constituents on than health care. I would strongly encourage the members opposite to support our amendment to the motion and to support the main motion as well.

**Mr. Sid Parker (Kootenay East):** Mr. Speaker, I would like to direct a few questions to my colleague from Prince George.

He mentioned the matter of trust, and I think this is something that we have to question with regard to the government's motives with respect to health care. During the last election, comments were made by government members about the level playing field with regard to the free trade agreement and so on.

They made comments about how the Americans were concerned about our social programs and we were notified by the government members that our social programs would not be affected. Yet, we have seen the changes to the Unemployment Insurance Act, which

now means the government has completely withdrawn its contribution to unemployment insurance and which brings about the level playing field that the Americans were calling for.

We have seen the clawback to the old age pensions whereby the social programs are being attacked there.

We have seen the cutbacks in the transfer payments to the provinces. We have seen the equalization grants being attacked. We have also heard comments from a former cabinet minister of the Conservative government with regard to the commitments to keep the Canadian dollar high, all part of the free trade agreement. When the member talked about the matter of trust, I say to him that it is important that we also identify the fact that the free trade agreement possibly has some of the ramifications of what the government is trying to bring about here.

I would like to ask my colleague from Prince George—Bulkley Valley if he identifies that as probably the biggest problem we have today with regard to the cutbacks in our social programs.

**Mr. Gardiner:** Mr. Speaker, I thank my colleague from Kootenay East for raising some very important questions. I know the tenacity with which he has raised other matters within the party and the caucus, and I know the hard work he has been doing in his riding on many issues, such as health care.

I made notes and there are three points which I picked up during his comments. The first one is trust. He is absolutely right. I suppose we have reached the stage where I am not sure that this government can be trusted. Certainly the question of trust is reflected in the correspondence I receive from my constituents about this government in particular and, unfortunately, regarding all elected people. That makes it more difficult for those who feel there is an alternative, a different way to do things. Of course we in the New Democratic Party believe very much that there is a different and better way to run and administer the affairs of the Government of Canada in order to develop a better country.

Some of the Conservative members opposite got a little excited when my hon. friend made reference to a former colleague of theirs who, during discussions on the free trade agreement, made some references to a secret deal between the Canadian government and the U.S. government in terms of letting our dollar go up and develop the level playing field, et cetera.