

According to my calculations, which have not been challenged by the government, even if the 3 per cent tax is removed, which represents about \$20 million, it may be putting an additional burden of \$30 million on these students. So there will still be a problem.

I simply want to point out—

[English]

Talking about EPF transfers for health and education, particularly dwelling on education, we have some serious problems in that domain and there have been serious cuts. I am really concerned that our competitiveness, our productivity, our ability to meet challenges such as globalization will be compromised.

Those members who have travelled within their ridings will note that post-secondary institutions in terms of building and equipment are not at all what they ought to be.

Let me finally come to the third segment, the Canada Assistance Plan. As my colleague has indicated, it is not directly involved, but it is an important part of the transfer payments. It involves \$7 billion.

It will be recalled that the government has decided to put a cap on CAP for three provinces, that is, British Columbia, Alberta and Ontario. That means basically that their social expenditures, if you wish, will be limited to 5 per cent. That is, the government will only match up to 5 per cent of their particular expenditures. I am concerned about this.

If we look at who will be affected, we know that it is going to be the poorest of Canada's citizens and that is unfortunate. We know as well that it will affect the basic necessities of life such as food, shelter, clothing, utilities and household supplies. There are a number of programs that will definitely be affected that are essential to Canada's poor. I mentioned dental care, essential living services for disabled persons, foster homes for abused children, safe housing for abused women and subsidized child care for low income families.

While the federal government does not directly establish those particular programs, it does participate in the funding of programs such as the ones that I have mentioned.

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My concern is that the poorest of the poor, those people who need those particular programs in order to enjoy a certain quality of life that is comparable to that in other parts of the country will in fact suffer. In other words, their difficulties will be borne increasingly by them and by the provincial authorities.

The government has been contested and, as you well know, it has won that contest in a court of law. But that still does not give it the moral right to abandon its responsibilities to the poor and disadvantaged Canadians.

I have argued before that in dealing that way, the government is off-loading on to those who are less able to pay and on to the backs of the provinces.

[Translation]

Mr. Speaker, it seems to me that, aside from what has already been done, what this review needs—in fact, it is already under way, if I am not mistaken—is a comprehensive view, to find out how we can respond to the needs of the provinces and the territories and the needs of their residents.

In terms of ensuring that our quality of life is comparable across this country, Bill C-60 is an improvement, but actually, it merely continues the *status quo* with a few small changes. What we need is a thorough review, a thorough assessment that will tell us what we can achieve in this country when we are deeply and firmly committed to ensuring that every Canadian enjoys a comparable quality of life.

[English]

My final comment is as follows. I applaud some of the improvements which have been made. We have to recognize that it is the extension of the *status quo*, that there is a review going on. I would like to see a public process with a time line that is identified, with an identification of all the major players who are going to be involved and with a good idea of where the government intends to end up. It is one of the more important undertakings in terms of assisting have not provinces and the citizens who live within their borders. What we really need is an in depth look at how a federal government such as this one and others that will follow can respond sensitively and in a common sense way to provinces, territories and their citizens in order to ensure that the quality of life is comparable whether we talk about health, education or any other services that we expect,