

Supply

Where does the Bloc Québécois stand? Despite the heavier tax burden we experienced in the last few years, it seems that federal expenditures always exceed revenues by over \$35 billion each year. It does not seem possible to increase the tax burden any further.

We should therefore have a look at expenditures and tax loopholes. In this regard, the Bloc Québécois will support every proposal to better manage our public expenditures and lower the annual deficit. The Bloc Québécois appeals once more to this government to scrutinize all budgetary items.

First of all, we should eliminate duplication, consolidate administrative units and bring about the decentralization of powers. Second, we should implement the corrective measures recommended each year by the Auditor General, whose reports always point out situations where billions of dollars of public money are wasted both in program spending and tax expenditures. Take for example foreign investments by corporations which are always mentioned since 1986.

We should then reexamine and eventually abolish special privileges granted to the wealthy through family trusts, on which the Department of Finance will not give any information whatsoever. Fourth, we should hand over to Quebec jurisdiction over manpower and training. We should also cut 25 per cent of the defence budget. That could save nearly \$3 billion without putting the security of Canada or Quebec in jeopardy.

The Conseil du patronat du Québec supports the Bloc Québécois position that duplication should be eliminated. The Conseil also agrees with the Bloc Québécois that the whole field of manpower training should be transferred to Quebec.

In my capacity as the official opposition critic for the Department of Veterans Affairs, I will endorse the Bloc Québécois position concerning that department and its mandate. The total estimated budget of that department for the fiscal year 1993-94 alone stands at \$2.1 billion. Of this amount, close to \$700 million is earmarked for health care, a third of all spending.

• (1200)

According to the 1993-94 estimates for Veterans Affairs Canada, health care claims have been on an unprecedented rise in the last few years. The reason for this is that veterans are getting much older, triggering higher administrative and financial costs.

These trends confirm that this department is taking more and more hospital space. In the last four years, health care costs went up in excess of 59 per cent. A third of the budget is spent on services already provided by Health and Welfare Canada and the Quebec department of health and social services. Hospital care is one of the areas where overlapping of government services is most frequent. We must ask ourselves if this duplication is

really necessary or if the provinces could not simply take over hospitals which are now managed by the federal government.

What makes these services so different from those provided by provincial hospitals? What sets veterans apart from the rest of the population? We are proposing a solution to reduce public spending without diminishing the quality and the amount of services. It is the kind of solution that must be looked at, and that the Bloc strongly advocates because the situation calls for it.

In conclusion, Mr. Speaker, the government cannot increase taxes, directly or indirectly. It must, however, do everything it can to reduce the annual deficit. Consequently, there is no other choice. It must cut public spending, but in an intelligent way so as to not hit the needy, the poor, and even all those in the middle class who work so hard to earn a living in this country.

I repeat that the government has to eliminate duplication of services and waste public funds. This is why so many Quebecers see in Quebec's sovereignty the only solution which will help save Canada from bankruptcy.

Mr. Don Boudria (Glengarry—Prescott—Russell): Mr. Speaker, I have just heard some of the remarks of the opposite member. He was talking about the veterans and the few institutions established to help them. Do I understand that he advocates the closing of the institution in Sainte-Anne-de-Bellevue? Did I hear him right?

Mr. Godin: Mr. Speaker, I thank the member for his comments. No, it is certainly not our intention to close the institution in Saint-Anne-de-Bellevue. In fact, we simply want to thoroughly review the whole system for the veterans at federal level and see if it would be possible to put an end to duplication of services in order to provide the same services to the veterans or to the general population in the provinces.

Mr. Boudria: Mr. Speaker, I am sorry, but I still did not quite understand the member's comments. Earlier, he was calling these kinds of things a duplication. If I understood him correctly, and I will check *Hansard* tomorrow, he said that there was no reason why veterans deserved to have a different service than others. Does he not believe that veterans deserve at least some special consideration? If this is not his position, I would ask him to take this opportunity to correct what he said a little earlier today.

• (1205)

Mr. Godin: Mr. Speaker, I am sorry, but that is not what I said. Indeed, I said—and you can verify that when you read the *Hansard*—we should maintain the same services and the same volumes. What I am simply saying is that we have identical organizations and systems, both on the federal and the provincial side, that are providing the same services. The same goes