

some of our people do not have these American Express cards or anything else.

Yet, we in the province of Ontario clearly are facing the deterioration of our medicare. I know he will agree with me, but what I want to say to the member is that the approach taken by the New Democratic Party today was maybe not the right approach that we have to sit down and talk about medicare, as the minister said: "We have to discuss it".

It should not be one-sided, and it should not be partisan. The question that I have to ask him is the following: Does he not see that if we go into NAFTA, the North American Free Trade Agreement or if we go into free trade the way that we went with the United States, then we are moving into that situation of using a gold American Express card in order to get an operation? This government should take responsibility for that. Clearly that will hurt the medicare system in Canada.

Does he not see that that clearly will put a burden on our medicare and the way that we are going to look after our citizens?

**Mr. Breagh:** Mr. Speaker, when the Liberals were the government in Ontario I supported the introduction of what was referred to as a smart card. It was an OHIP card which would allow the province of Ontario to track who was using the medical system and what kind of services were provided to them. It would keep track in a more efficient way what was happening in the health care system.

That is a good solution. It is not an ultimate solution. It did not solve a whole lot of problems, but it is one of the things that we do not know about the provision of medical care services in Ontario and in Canada that I think we should know. That has not been exactly a crashing success, but I remained undeterred. It was a good idea at the time and I said so. I still think so.

The member has raised an interesting concept for all of us. As I said in my remarks, in the United States health care is a business, without question and without apology. It is a simple and straightforward business proposition for profit. That is about as far away from the medical care system that we in Canada know and enjoy.

### *Supply*

Unfortunately, in places like Mexico and many other countries in the world, it is neither a medical care system such as we know it or a business as the Americans know it. It exists in no form that we would even recognize, much less so than in either of those two well-established countries.

I share a little bit some of the concerns about the free trade agreement with the States and with the North American free trade agreement. That will be further erosion of what we in Canada have come to treasure as being very important to the nature and the culture of our country. I share that concern with him.

**Mr. René Soetens (Ontario):** Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask the member for Oshawa a question, recognizing his immense experience in the provincial legislature as it relates to health care. Of course, his constituency and mine are side by side. We have experienced similar problems in probably all issues, but certainly in the health care issue.

The province of Ontario is undergoing some problems in health care, not unlike the rest of Canada. I have heard the minister of health in the province of Ontario say that in fact it is not the money that is the problem.

The member made reference that the solution is a combined solution that everybody must participate in. With that comment in mind, I would wonder why it is that the New Democratic Party has been so critical of the federal government when it says: "These are the dollars we have available for you. That is all you are going to get", when the minister of health for the province of Ontario is saying the same thing to the hospitals: "This is all the money we have available for you. This is all you are going to get. You will have to collectively work within that framework". Is that any different than what the federal government is saying to the provinces when it says it is only going to give 2 per cent more, or whatever the dollars are?

**Mr. Breagh:** The member and I share a certain part of Ontario and that is about all we share together. I do not mind that, it is fair ball.

The question he has put to the House is an interesting one. Were we not in a self-generated depression here, the cries of financial failure from all across Canada would be somewhat different. The political reality is, as someone else said, that Ontario is a have not province.