

*Government Orders*

I come from the province of British Columbia which is having difficulties these days with its health care system. It is an absolute shame what the Vander Zalm government has done to health care in British Columbia. There are hospitals throughout the province that have all the equipment, all the facilities, and all the operating rooms they need. What they do not have is staff because the B.C. government, under Bill Vander Zalm, is against hiring people to work in hospitals or paying them decent wages. That is because he does not understand one thing in his Liberal-Tory mind. He forgets the fact that it is not buildings that care for people, it is not equipment that cares for people, it is people who care for people and he should be hiring people in those hospitals so that they can deliver the services.

It is necessary to send sick British Columbians across the border to Seattle and Bellingham in Washington and to Portland, Oregon, to get surgery when we have the facilities and the equipment. We just do not have a government with the right kind of priorities.

This is the kind of legislation that backs up the insane social policy of people like Bill Vander Zalm. I would encourage my Liberal friends to vote for this motion and against this legislation and to let us get on with developing quality social programs in this country.

**Mr. Rod Laporte (Moose Jaw—Lake Centre):** Madam Speaker, I too rise with respect to this motion. This is an issue that is fundamental to this country. It has always been my impression, and I think it is the impression of many Canadians, that health and education are two of the most fundamental issues in our society today. When a government ignores those issues it does so at the peril of the future of this nation. What is a nation if we do not have a strong recognition and a strong desire to educate people to their best capability, to encourage the society to move ahead? In order to move ahead it needs a commitment by governments, both federal and provincial, to education.

Health as well is a fundamental issue to society. With the advances in technology and with the prospects for help in the future, it is necessary for a government to have a major commitment to health. Unfortunately, this government has fallen short on both counts.

Approximately \$19 billion is transferred to the provinces each year, with roughly 70 per cent or \$13.3 billion of that amount going for hospital insurance and medicare. The effect of this bill is to freeze at current levels funding for federal transfers for the next two fiscal years, 1990-91 and 1991-92. After that, the transfers will grow at the rate of the GNP, minus 3 per cent.

This is not the first time that this government has affected health and education in this way. Back in 1986 this particular government cut 2 per cent from the rate of growth in health and education spending. In fact, the government began declining its support in relation to the Gross National Product.

The effect of this bill will be to cut \$7.3 billion from federal transfers between 1991 and 1994-95. When the effect of the 1986 cuts is included, the total amount cut between 1986 and 1995, as calculated by the Library of Parliament, will be something in the order of \$29 billion.

What effect is that having? It is having some tremendous effects. I have been personally affected by a family in the riding, the Attfields who live in Lanigan, Saskatchewan. Mrs. Attfield has written a number of times and made comments publicly. In an article in the Lanigan paper not so very long ago she indicated that Princess Margaret Hospital in Toronto—one place in which life-saving bone marrow transplants are taking place—received enough cuts to force it to cancel 10 transplants in one year. Her husband, Kevin, had bone cancer and needed a transplant. Her husband, who was supposed to have a transplant in February, waited until July to have his transplant. During this period his condition went into an advanced stage and the bone marrow transplant did not work.

She wrote that oncology specialists in Saskatoon and Toronto told them that had his transplant taken place when it was scheduled, the success rate would have been much higher and the transplant probably would have worked. She wrote: "Because it was postponed, the leukaemia that Kevin is afflicted with will probably cost him his life".

This morning I phoned Mrs. Attfield to discuss this matter with her. I was advised that Kevin died this morning. It is a tragedy when something like that happens. You feel helpless as an elected member standing and talking to this Chamber. The need for a commitment to health care has to be there. The reality is there.