British Columbia, in excess of $100 million. It has an enormous impact for Canadians.

I guess what will happen in the situation is that people will be very concerned. In the short term the Conservative government has one more year to go to November 22, 1993. In that period of time people will be very concerned about what further damage can be done. There is clearly an indication with the present deficit that the Conservative government will take even further action.

In a speech in Alberta the Minister of Finance indicated that the way they were going to deal with the current deficit of the federal government and its failure to reach any of the targets it has set for Canada was by more attacks on the health care programs of Canada and more attacks on the social programs of Canada. In that speech the Minister of Finance indicated that he was laying proposals before cabinet that would lead to an even further erosion of the health care system. We are looking at, probably by the year 2000, a multi-billion dollar impact on each one of the provinces in terms of lost resources for the health care system.

There is no guarantee of what will happen during the period. The Liberal Party of Canada in 1969 certainly put the licensing procedure in place that allowed generic drugs to come on the market, but by 1983 it was certainly talking about changing that process. It is very worrisome for Canadians that the Liberals will not deliver on what they are talking about in the House today and during the debate of this bill. In fact some members are very careful to couch their presentation which allows them an opportunity, if they come to power, to maintain support for the foreign multinational drug companies to maintain those patents.

It has to be a clear, unequivocal statement in the House because waffling will not work. Too many people remember what happened with the Liberal Party in the election debate when it said: "Of course we will not have wage and price controls". A short period of time into its term after winning that election we had wage and price controls.

There is no clear statement on the trade agreement from the Liberal Party. It appears quite clearly that it supports it, but there is certainly the waffle factor. On the issue of reversing the legislation that the Conservative government has placed in the House to allow a free run of generic drugs in Canada, it is absolutely critical that the Liberal Party stands up, stops waffling and lays unequivocally before the House and the people of Canada its position on abolishing this legislation and permitting generic drugs.

There is a lot of discussion about a former Liberal cabinet minister running the Canadian Pharmaceutical Association public relations campaign to sell this pile of nonsense to the people of Canada. Judy Erola, cabinet minister and member of Parliament who sat in this House, is now the shill for those drug companies.

Some hon. members: Consumer Affairs too.

Mr. Skelly (North Island—Powell River): Exactly, Consumer and Corporate Affairs, an incredible conflict of interest.

The right hon. member for Vancouver Quadra sitting on the Canadian board of directors of a Swiss drug company is certainly a very questionable position when we are trying to establish a consensus in the opposition in this House and the legislation of the Conservative government to promote brand name pharmaceuticals to Canadians at a high price and to exclude generic drugs is in question.

There needs to be some assistance to provinces, to hospitals across Canada, to begin to buy pharmaceuticals in ways that permit them to make major savings and to avoid the high price regimes of patented pharmaceuticals and brand name pharmaceuticals. The same should apply to prescriptions by physicians. There needs to be an opportunity for physicians to gain information about lower priced alternatives to the brand name pharmaceuticals. This has to occur and has to occur quickly.

• (1800)

PROCEEDINGS ON ADJOURNMENT MOTION

[*English*]

A motion to adjourn the House under Standing Order 38 deemed to have been moved.