Ms. Copps: Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask the Hon. Member for Ottawa Centre (Mr. Cassidy) if he can comment on the remarks made by the Minister of Finance in his Opposition days, when he said for instance, concerning the financial program situation with reference to the then Liberal Government: The only way the federal Government is reducing its expenditures is by transferring to Provincial Governments the burden of established program funding. The provinces are now faced with a deficit and they are therefore in an even worse position to take over these expenses from the federal Government. This is not cooperative federalism, but predatory federalism, and it cannot and will not work in Canada. This is what the Hon. Minister of Finance said when he was sitting on the side of the Opposition on March 23, 1982.

I would like to ask the Hon. Member for Ottawa Centre why, in his opinion, the Minister of Finance reversed his stand in this way. In 1982, he was very categorical about federal transfers to the provinces, but he now seems to have changed his mind.

Mr. Cassidy: If I could explain how the minds of the Conservatives work, I would be a very wise man. However, I have no idea how they do. As the Hon. Member for Hamilton East well knows, I quoted other statements of the Minister of Finance made in the same spirit as that one.

This means that, when he sat on the side of the Opposition, the Minister of Finance always attacked the Liberal Government because of cut-backs, but now, instead of reversing the cut-backs he used to criticize, he himself makes cut-backs in the established programs financing which may be even worse than those imposed by the former Liberal Government.

I do not want to see us go back to the days of the former Liberal Government because, when I meet my constituents, they recall how the Liberal Government had become arrogant and isolated from the Canadian voters. However, Mr. Speaker, Canadians are becoming increasingly suspicious of the Conservative Government when they see all the faults of the former Liberal Government multiplied now that the Conservatives are in power.

Ms. Copps: Mr. Speaker, could the Hon. Member for Ottawa Centre indicate what impact, in his opinion, these cuts are likely to have on health costs? Because he referred earlier to the provinces' need to have access to waiting rooms and emergency rooms, and I know it is a fairly serious question, even in the Ottawa region. In this regard, could he indicate how the general public, and especially the patients, will have to pay following the transfer of the cast burden from the federal level to the provinces?

Mr. Cassidy: Mr. Speaker, the people will indeed have to pay in terms of reduced services and longer waiting lists for elective surgery. As everybody knows, the longer you have to wait for elective surgery, the worse your condition will get. The condition may be serious, but not serious enough to justify an immediate intervention. Just the same, for the patient who is being incapacitated to such a point that he cannot work, it means that he has to stay home. This will be reflected for instance in the provinces' capacity to provide a patient with the services which might save his or her life. I refer for instance to the use of dialysis devices for patients with kidney conditions. It is of course optional in terms of how many dialysis units are available in each region of the country and in the absence of other technology.

A province makes a truly life and death decision when it chooses not to invest to ensure that enough of these equipments are available to those who need them.

Ms. Copps: Mr. Speaker, I must say I am surprised that not a single Conservative Member is interested in the health question, for it seems to me it is a very important issue.

Still I would like to speak to the education issue for a moment because we already know there have been repercussions in the post-secondary education sector. For example, we know that barely a few days ago a Supreme Court justice took what was an extraordinary step when he said that the post-secondary education situation in Canada is deteriorating to such an extent that we are falling behind among the most educated nations of the western world. I should like to ask the Hon. Member for Ottawa Centre (Mr. Cassidy) whether he has any suggestion, more precisely how these education budget cut-backs would affect the francophone community outside Quebec, especially for instance people who are now attending the University of Ottawa or other universities where full post-secondary education in French is available?

Will they be more or less severely affected by these budgetary cut-backs?

Mr. Cassidy: Everybody is affected. The University of Ottawa, for instance, which is an excellent institution and the only one to offer an outstanding program for the Franco-Ontarian community. Every other university in Ontario will be affected as well. In Ontario there are now discussions about plans for rationalizing post-secondary education services. What it boils down to is an attempt to make some of our institutions second-class universities. And why? Because the authorities have decided they will not have sufficient resources in the future to maintain the quality of all post-secondary institutions. And so, Canadians living in the area around Toronto or in the Kingston area, near Queen's University, will have access to an outstanding university, but the other universities will have to be downgraded to second class. That is something I cannot accept.

The University of Ottawa with its French program will certainly be affected. I would like to point out to the Hon. Member that last year, in Quebec, the University of Montreal had a deficit of $14 million and Concordia University had a deficit of $28 million. That is a lot of money, The combined deficit for all universities in Quebec is $80 million, and that is before the cutbacks that will be imposed by the Quebec Governement, if the province has no other option as a result of Bill C-96. I would like to recall the following statement in the