

S. O. 31

How have we reached this medicare crisis? Through the Liberal bloc funding arrangements of 1977, through the Liberal's six and five program of 1982 and through the continued cuts of the present Minister of Finance.

Now, Conservative and Liberal provincial governments, led by the Liberal government of Quebec, want to destroy medicare through the introduction of user fees and extra billing. The federal NDP has rejected the dismantling of medicare. So has the Ontario NDP government, and so have the four western NDP leaders which issued a statement yesterday in Saskatoon. Only the New Democrats will protect medicare for all Canadians.

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AIR CANADA

Mr. Ron MacDonald (Dartmouth): Once again Atlantic Canada has borne the brunt of another one of this government's disastrous, ill-conceived private sector mania policies. Just a week ago over 140 Air Canada employees in the Atlantic region found that their jobs were disappearing as the Atlantic reservations office was being relocated to central Canada.

With no consultation, these jobs and over \$5 million were sucked out of the Atlantic economy. Remember, Air Canada used to be Canada's national airline with a mandate to serve every region in this country, a mandate that was destroyed when this Tory government insisted on delivering it into the hands of private enterprise. At that time it was the Liberals who predicted that this very thing would happen and it is now the Liberals who will fight with the Atlantic employees of Air Canada against this ill-conceived centralization of this once great airline.

We serve notice to Air Canada head office that we will fight these cuts with all means at our disposal. We remind them that they are not the only player in the field, that Atlantic travellers do have an option. If Air Canada refuses to alter this decision, members of the Liberal caucus will urge our travelling public to exercise that option.

CANADA'S GREEN PLAN

Mr. Stan Wilbee (Delta): Mr. Speaker, when Simon Fraser and his voyageurs first navigated the Fraser River almost 200 years ago, they could dip a wooden ladle into the river whenever they felt thirsty. Along many stretches of that same river today one would be loath to put their hand in the water, much less drink it.

The government's commitment to clean up the Fraser River as part of the green plan is a welcome announcement to the citizens of British Columbia. The Fraser River Basin Action Plan combined with new regulations to restrict pulp and paper mill effluent and initiatives to double the fish population in the river will help to reverse the damage that has been done over the years.

It will be a long time before we can take a drink directly from the Fraser and it will take a lot of hard work, but I am confident that by working together the federal and provincial governments, communities, industry, and individuals can clean up our past mistakes to restore the mighty Fraser.

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IMMIGRATION

Mr. Alfonso Gagliano (Saint-Léonard): Mr. Speaker, for many Canadians this will be yet another Christmas without their spouses and families.

Ms. Copps: Shame.

Mr. Gagliano: I would like to read a letter to this House which is addressed to the minister of immigration:

I am writing this application in absolute desperation and frustration over the way the department has been handling my wife's visa application. I got married to my wife—on January 29, 1989. On my return to Canada I asked for an appointment to file an application. Application was filed on April 24, 1989.

Since then another 20 months have passed and she is still awaiting for a visa. You may kindly note that she didn't get any appointment yet for an interview or a medical. Repeated inquiry bore no results. At a pace this case is being handled it looks like this visa is going to take another few years before I can be united with my wife. Long separation is already taking its toll and only I know, before I have a total nervous breakdown. Since no one seems to care in your esteemed organization I am writing for your help to obtain a visa for my wife to be with me doesn't matter what type—

Mr. Speaker: The hon. member's time has expired.