

federal government is now contributing only 37 per cent both through the tax points and the cash transfers and that the provinces are in fact picking up 63 per cent.

Another thing that has happened is that the cash transfer payments to the provinces have been going down. The Library of Parliament documents again show that they have been going down dramatically, and the projections are that they will cease totally as early as 1995-96 in Quebec and 1997-98 in Ontario and be completely finished in the early part of the next century.

For a long time the federal government said that this was not going to happen, to start with. Then it said that it did not matter, but in its own budget it admitted that without that cash transfer payment it could not enforce the Canada Health Act.

Therefore it is proposing to amend other acts: the Financial Administration Act which has to do with equalization payments. The problem is that the three big provinces—Alberta, B.C. and Ontario—do not get equalization payments. The biggest pot of money that they would then have to start holding back would be from the Canada Assistance Plan. It would be very difficult for them to justify the holding back of moneys designed for child welfare services, child abuse or income support programs because a province did not comply with national health care standards. We have not seen any great enthusiasm on the part of any federal government to enforce national health care standards.

I turn my attention now to some other things that must be looked at when one looks at people's priorities, commitment and record in terms of medicare. We should look at what the provincial Liberal governments are doing? What is the Liberal commitment to medicare, when we look at the track record of Liberal provincial governments?

First of all let us take a look at Newfoundland. That province has closed 360 acute care beds this week, including closing acute care hospital service in Port aux Basques, which means that community must drive three hours to receive basic health care. There is no question of accessibility any more.

They are not living up to the spirit of the Canada Health Act. There is no accessibility. They have laid off 300 nurses or 10 per cent of the nursing staff. Is this the Liberal's idea of maintaining national health care standards?

### *Supply*

Jack Harris, a New Democratic member of that legislature, asked Premier Clyde Wells if he would make the provision of national medicare and the federal spending cuts a national crusade and go across the country in order to save medicare. Of course, Premier Wells declined by saying it was not a priority for him. He talks about trying to save national unity, and one of the major components of national unity is our health care system: a national, portable health care system that is equally available to all people across Canada. He is not prepared to try to make sure it is not eroded.

Let us take the Liberal government in the province of P.E.I. Unilaterally it denies all women in that province access to a fundamental, basic health care service: abortions. That is the Liberals way of deciding universality and accessibility to health care. The Liberal government simply says: "It is not available, period". Is that a commitment to a national, portable, universal, accessible health care system? Is that the Liberal record? Is that the Liberal philosophy?

In the province of New Brunswick the Minister of Finance is saying: "Of course we cannot comply with the Canada Health Act and national standards. We do not have the will. We do not have the means". Basically he is simply saying: "We will no longer comply with the Canada Health Act". There is no commitment to national standards.

In Nova Scotia, not one of the four remaining provinces that have Liberal governments, what does it say? Minister of Health George Moody said: "If people want certain levels of care, maybe they want to pay an extra \$25 or \$30". He could not rule out that there would be more and higher co-pay charges to consumers, user fees. What is the record of the Liberal government in that province?

• (1230)

The Liberal Government of the Province of Quebec is on record as saying that it wants the federal government out of funding of national medicare so that it can introduce user fees. It is even willing to forgo some of the revenue, because it wants to introduce user fees.

What we have is a Liberal record that relates to how they are the responsible ones for eroding medicare at the federal level. Of course we can look at the provincial