

## HEALTH CARE

**Mr. Jim Karpoff (Surrey North):** Madam Speaker, my question is for the Deputy Prime Minister.

The Canadian Hospital Association today released a report on health care reform entitled *An Open Future, A Shared Vision* which clearly states that after eight years of Tory rule the state of Canada's economy is a threat to our health care system and a threat to the health of Canadians. It recognizes the link between unemployment, poverty and poor health.

Both leading contenders for the Tory leadership have supported the government's economic policy and have promised to stay the course.

In view of the report by the Canadian Hospital Association, will the government now change its economic policy and implement a full employment policy as called for by the Leader of the New Democratic Party?

**Hon. Don Mazankowski (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance):** Madam Speaker, one of the reasons the leadership candidates are wisely taking the position they are going to stay the course in terms of the government's economic policy is the fact that again today we see the Statistics Canada composite leading indicator rising by .8 per cent. That is the largest increase in two years. That is further testimony to the fact that in the fourth quarter of 1992 we had a gross domestic product growth in real terms of 3.5 per cent and almost 4 per cent in the first quarter of 1993.

What is most encouraging and most important is that this growth is occurring in the goods producing sector, that sector that will generate jobs today and in the future.

**Mr. Jim Karpoff (Surrey North):** Madam Speaker, my supplementary question is for the same minister.

The report by the Canadian Hospital Association states that in order to prevent the Balkanization of our health care system there must be stable federal government funding of health care at a level that will allow the federal government to enforce national standards.

In view of this statement will the government now commit that it will restore the established programs funding for health care?

## Oral Questions

**Hon. Don Mazankowski (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance):** Madam Speaker, as I have indicated in the House many times between the period 1984-85 to 1992-93 transfers to the provinces have grown at a rate of 5.2 per cent per year. That has caused almost a doubling in the amount of transfers made by the federal government to the provinces.

Something in the order of \$40.5 billion in cash and tax point transfers will be made to the provinces this year. Even though our program expenditures will grow in real terms at zero or 1.5 per cent nominal, the growth in transfers to the provinces over the next five-year period will be just under 4 per cent. That is clear indication based on past statistics and future projections that the funding will be provided in an orderly and acceptable fashion.

**Mr. Jim Karpoff (Surrey North):** Madam Speaker, because of the cutbacks in federal transfer payments by the government the report outlines a number of alternatives for financing of health care which include direct user charges or, as we would call them, user fees. New Democrats of course will oppose such altering of funding.

• (1430)

Will the Deputy Prime Minister again confirm that in spite of the waffling from the Tory leadership candidates that his government will not allow the provinces to introduce user fees?

**Hon. Don Mazankowski (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance):** Madam Speaker, to reiterate the point that I made earlier, the growth in federal transfers to the provinces has risen from \$25.6 billion in 1984-85 to \$40.5 billion in 1993-94. It continues to grow at a rate of something just under 4 per cent.

What has to be said here is that most of the stakeholders in the health care sector are suggesting that it is not necessarily a matter of more money, it is a matter of spending the money more effectively and using the resources more effectively and efficiently. That is precisely what the HEAL organization is all about and I suspect is what is really underlying some of the recommendations that are enshrined in this report.