

*The Budget*

the cuts to health and education spending. The total effect of the 1986 cuts was over \$2 billion between 1986-87 and 1988-89. Because of the magic of compounding, the initial cuts have now reached \$2 billion each year and, of course, the figure is growing. That just represents one of the three cuts this government has made with regard to health and post-secondary education funding.

When we consider the effects of the new freeze on health and post-secondary education funding, we have to include the 1 per cent cut announced last year. Incidentally, Bill C-33, which announced that cut has still not been passed by Parliament and, of course if New Democrats and the people of Canada have anything to do with it, we will make sure that it never gets passed.

The Minister of Finance has said that the government will save \$7.3 billion over five years with the proposed freeze in transfer payments. The effect of this, plus the 1 per cent cut last year, if that is included, plus the 2 per cent, means that the actual cut that this government has made to health and post-secondary education is close to \$11 billion over a seven-year period. To indicate the magnitude of that cut, the annual budget of the University of Saskatchewan, as you fully well know, Mr. Speaker, is about \$160 million. That shows the extent of the cuts of this government, the slashing that it is making of two of our most valuable programs, health and post-secondary education.

• (1620)

If health and education spending had grown at the rate expected before the minister began to amputate the funds, the federal government would be spending \$30 billion more between 1986-87 and 1994-95. These cuts are unprecedented in their size, and they are unprecedented in their lack of consultation.

I do not suppose the Minister of Finance would find one hospital, one university, one student, one professor, one doctor or one nurse who agreed with the extent of these cuts. In fact, they are so huge that they are even greater than the gouging and slashing undertaken by the Liberals when they introduced their infamous six and five program which dramatically cut spending on post-secondary education and made two other further cuts to both health and post-secondary education.

Mr. Speaker, what we are seeing is the end of a dream. When New Democrats forced the federal government to bring in medicare and hospital insurance nearly 30 years ago, it was recognized that Canadians from every part of the country should have similar levels of health care. That is why a national program was designed, so that every province, not just the better off ones could provide health care.

The then Prime Minister, Mr. Diefenbaker, who was so much a champion of health care would turn over in his grave when watching what his modern-day colleagues are doing. It was recognized then and it remains just as true today that Canadians should not be penalized by their place of birth or by how poor their parents are. Every Canadian has a right to medical care. It is immoral and unjust to place a higher value on the health and lives of the rich, or those who live in wealthier provinces, than on the health and lives of the poor, or those who live in less well-off regions.

Perhaps the Minister of Health needs to be reminded that he has moved from being the Minister of Defence to the Minister of Health. The defence budget will recognize an increase by some \$700 million in this budget, while the health care budgets and education budgets of this country are slashed.

This is a government which prefers guns over health care. It is a government whose priorities are wrong. With post-secondary education in the late sixties, the federal government began a system of transfers of tax points and cash to the provinces. There was a national consensus that young people from every part of the country should have access to higher education.

Young people in Newfoundland and Saskatchewan should not be forced to travel thousands of miles to attend universities in southern Ontario. Young people in Quebec should have access to higher education in their own language rather than travelling outside the province to study in a foreign tongue far from home.

The national dream of equal treatment for all Canadians is being destroyed by the government's actions in this budget. This government has determined that it does not matter who you are, it matters how thick your wallet is. Post-secondary education will no longer be available to bright young people if their parents are poor. Universities and colleges will become the preserves, even more than they are now, of the upper classes. No longer will health care be a right. Now we copy the horrifying