

*Supply*

What I do object to, aside from the fact that taxation has increased so much, is that as it takes your money out of your pocket, it turns around with crocodile tears and says: "But really, we do not have any money, we have to cut services. We cannot give you health care, we cannot give you education grants any more, we have to reduce this, we have to reduce that. Believe me with my hand on my heart, I believe in universality. I believe in the public good. We are pristine still in the way we abide by our ideology. Please do not ask us to prove it because the proof is in the pudding".

What we see are tax increases, cuts in services and a total abdication of the responsibility that comes to an incumbent in office.

I do not agree with my colleague who spoke earlier about there being an equal partnership in the medicare system. In principle it is true. But what has happened is that on one side the government of the day at the federal level is saying: "It is time the provinces carried their load". And on the other side the NDP provincial governments, especially in Ontario, are saying: "I am sorry, but we are going to wash our hands of this. Our federal cousins please point the finger elsewhere". We cannot have that.

• (1610)

Therefore, I am going to move an amendment to that motion. My amendment is seconded by my hon. colleague from Broadview—Greenwood and the hon. member for Winnipeg North who is not in his seat. He is anxious to be part of this.

All my colleagues present have come to this House like the rain in spring—which we finally see today—and which brings new life to Parliament and to this debate.

I move, seconded by my colleague from Winnipeg North and my other colleagues here:

That the motion be amended by deleting all of the words after the word "system".

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski):** May I have a copy of the amendment? The hon. member can continue with questions and comments while I have a look at the amendment.

**Mr. Karpoff:** Mr. Speaker, on a point of order, before the Speaker rules on the validity of the amendment I would presume that he will give us an opportunity to take a look at it and present arguments as to whether we think it is a legitimate, appropriate and a procedurally correct amendment.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski):** I think once the Speaker rules on it, it will be validity enough. Yes, it is a good motion.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Marcel Prud'homme (Saint-Denis):** Mr. Speaker, I want to thank you for your wise decision. In fact, there was a meeting of minds on this important issue, because after the Speaker and you yourself, advised by the able officers of this House, had ruled the first amendment we submitted to the House out of order, I immediately went to see those same advisers at the table and suggested they insert a period. While I was discussing this with our friends and advisers, our critic, the member for Winnipeg North and also the member for Eglinton—Lawrence already had the text of this amendment, which is quite in order. I want to thank you for having ruled immediately, *prima facie* that it was in order.

We can now debate "that this House express its concern at the threat to Canada's health system". That is what the NDP should have said, instead of trying to embarrass members who have a lot to say about our health system. There is widespread concern among Canadians, and what was said by my esteemed colleague from Toronto and other members has certainly raised some questions in my mind.

In a society, there are a number of choices to make. When public moneys become scarce, certain priorities must be identified. Obviously, the first thing people in my riding think about as they grow older is health care, which is the centrepiece of our social programs and must not be tampered with. Although I try and see them as often as I can, I must apologize to the people who are listening and who would like to see us more often. Unfortunately, in Ottawa the House sits five days a week, eight or ten months a year. And the same applies to hon. members opposite. When we visit senior citizens' homes, their main concern is not where to spend their holidays, because often they cannot afford holidays, but they want the assurance that they can count on proper medical care.

[*English*]

I regret that the NDP has chosen this kind of approach for such a very serious subject. By politicizing this important issue, we are obliged to become partisan. As far as I am concerned, the government has the responsibility which it will take when it votes. We have the responsibility to talk about a real subject. I am glad that my colleague from the opposition—there is no such a