

Supply

• (1255)

Briefly, to answer the question, I think we have reached a decisive stage. We must get out of this artificial financing, because Canada no longer has the artificial means to spend as if there were no tomorrow. The debt is no longer the government's business, when people from outside the country come to tell the government to find ways to control the debt.

So they closed the tap part of the way. The federal government decided it would offload budget cuts on the provinces, and now we are going to have to pick up the pieces. You can live beyond your means some of time, but not all of the time. In any case, there will have to be some major structural changes, but the most positive change would be to give these two communities, Quebec and Canada, a chance to develop side by side without putting obstacles in each other's way, and to let them each control their own future.

[English]

Mrs. Stewart (Brant): Madam Speaker, I think the hon. member has just made my case. He says that the people of Quebec want to have the responsibility to spend the moneys on health, education and social assistance in the way they see fit.

That is what the block transfer allows them to do. We put the money together in a fund and give it to the provinces that constitutionally have the responsibility to provide programs and services for health, education and social assistance. We are telling them they know best. They can take the money and allocate it in the way they see best fitting for the people of Quebec. The block transfer gives that flexibility. It gives the provinces the responsibility to respond to its own constituency in those areas.

In the course of the debate I cannot see that the opposition has any real clarity or substance to its point.

[Translation]

Mr. Crête: Madam Speaker, I think the clearest answer to this question, the best example, to be objective, is not to be found in Quebec, but in Alberta. The provincial government there has an approach which is very different from what the federal government might wish. It is almost forced to cheat with federal standards in the area of health. It is forced to beat about the bush, because it wants different rules. But the federal government, despite its reduced funding, feels free to establish very clear national standards regarding the five principal conditions. And so the provincial government becomes the bad guy. Provincial governments are certainly not going to accept responsibility for the years of bad management of funds by the federal government.

Mr. Denis Paradis (Brome—Missisquoi, Lib.): Madam Speaker, I would like to make a couple of comments on what we have just heard.

First, a reminder regarding the Canada social transfer. Could it be that what the Bloc members do not like in this is the word "Canada"? They might like it better if it were called the Bloc social transfer. Indeed, it is the word "Canada" that irritates them the most in the expression Canada social transfer.

It must be pointed out that the Canada social transfer includes education, health care, and social assistance. From now on, under the Canada social transfer, Quebec will receive block funding, as will all the other provinces, each one of them; the Quebec government will be able to allocate this block funding as it sees fit. It will decide how much will go to education, how much to health care, and how much to social assistance. This is important.

The federal government is only setting the following two conditions; this is extraordinary decentralization and flexible federalism. First, the health care system will have to remain Canadian, and accessible to all Canadians. As our Prime Minister has said on several occasions, the health care system must allow people to be admitted to the hospital when they are sick, not because they have money.

Therefore, a universal health care system is the first condition. The second one is that there be no minimal residence requirements. This is simple, this is not complicated, this is what the Canada social transfer is all about, whether you like it or not. Furthermore, the member for Kamouraska—Rivière-du-Loup mentioned earlier that this system was centralizing.

• (1300)

I would like to go back to something I said earlier using FORD-Q as an example. This is something I discussed with several of my constituents—I am fresh out of an election campaign and have been in this House for close to three months—and people in Brome—Missisquoi want to keep FORD-Q. Not only do they want to keep it but, as I mentioned earlier, at a forum recently held in Trois-Rivières on the future of the regions in Quebec, people demanded that Quebec do its share with regard to regional development. To this day, Quebec has done nothing. The federal example is convincing and I believe that we must continue along the same line.

To conclude, I would like to ask a question to the member.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Maheu): I am sorry, but the member has risen on debate. He has 10 minutes. I understand that you are sharing your time.

Mr. Paradis: Madam Speaker, I thought I had risen on questions and comments. For the debate, I intend to share my time with the member for Durham.

The motion of the opposition suggests, among other things, that the legislation implementing the Agreement on Internal Trade is aimed at reducing Quebec's powers to the benefit of the federal government. First of all, I would like the member for