

cial Liberal government which is responsible for administering those services.

It is worth while for the hon. member to note the fact that since we came to office increases in transfer payments for health care have been in the order of about \$4 billion in Canada.

Ms. Albina Guarnieri (Mississauga East): Mr. Speaker, we have heard this minister's protest before. Tonight his bluff will be called at six o'clock. This government will have to vote against or for medicare.

During the first five years of this government, the average increase in established programs funding was 6.3 per cent, and yet the quality of care declined over the period.

Earlier today the minister repeated that his government's contribution to medicare will extend by only 1.2 per cent in the coming year. This can only accelerate the deterioration of health care services.

Why is the minister allowing federal support for medicare to erode faster than the rate of inflation?

Mr. Speaker: The hon. minister has made reference to a long-standing rule in the House that questions ought not to anticipate the Order of the Day. Despite that the minister has, as is his right and if he wishes to, responded. This question is clearly taken right out of the debate which has been taking place in this House. I think I have to say that it is out of order. If the minister wishes to reply he can, but he does not have to. I want to make it very clear that the minister does not have to reply.

Hon. Perrin Beatty (Minister of National Health and Welfare): Mr. Speaker, precisely because of the information that was put on the record by the hon. member I want to reply. She refers to our bluff being called tonight at 6 p.m.

What members opposite, in the guise of a motion in support of medicare, are doing is proposing a motion of non-confidence in the government. In order to vote for medicare members of the government would have to be voting non-confidence.

Surely the people of Canada expect greater honesty and sincerity from the opposition than that.

Oral Questions

Some hon. members: Hear. hear.

HEALTH

Ms. Joy Langan (Mission—Coquitlam): Mr. Speaker, my question is about the Meme breast implant and it is for the minister of health and welfare.

Over a million Canadian women face breast cancer in their lifetime. Twelve thousand Canadian women have received Meme breast implants. Forty cases implicating the Meme breast implant are currently before the U.S. courts. A Canadian woman from Delta, B.C. is before our courts in Canada. Surely the minister has some concept of all the horrors of cancer and knows there are serious concerns about the Meme implant.

Why then does the minister continue to refuse to order that the Meme breast implant be withdrawn from the market until all questions of its safety have been answered?

Hon. Perrin Beatty (Minister of National Health and Welfare): Because, Mr. Speaker, all of the evidence available for the Government of Canada to date indicates that the Meme is equally safe as other breast implants.

What is taking place in the United States is the FDA is reviewing evidence with regard to all breast implants. We will review that evidence as well.

What we have done in Canada is commission independent studies, for example the Kerrigan report. Second, a study done by the University of Ottawa demonstrates that the Meme does not release carcinogens under conditions which are found in the human body.

We will be following carefully any new scientific evidence that is educed at any time, but based on the evidence that is available to the Government of Canada today there is no reason to believe that the Meme breast implant is not safe.

Ms. Joy Langan (Mission—Coquitlam): Mr. Speaker, it would appear that there is systemic sexual discrimination in our health care system. The minister is screwing up his face and saying that is not true, but I would like to ask a question.