

Supply

Canadians can listen to all the pros and cons. Let Canadians decide, and not on a procedural basis. We have to nip in the bud a fundamental principle of reality today.

Mr. Martin: Madam Speaker, it is difficult to understand the reasoning of the members of the NDP who would argue against our amendment.

The essence of our amendment is that as a result of the withdrawal of the federal government from its longstanding obligations, the health care system is in peril. Section 81(11) says that opposition motions may relate to any matter within the jurisdiction of the Parliament of Canada.

The argument is very clear. If our amendment is not acceptable because it is not related to the principle of the motion, and our amendment relates to the federal government, then the original motion should not be allowed. An opposition motion must relate to an issue relating to the jurisdiction of the Parliament of Canada.

The argument is very clear. Our amendment must be accepted, and if our amendment is not accepted, it can only be on the ground that the original motion itself is out of order.

Mr. Karpoff: Madam Speaker, the last two speakers who are trying to cite that this amendment should be in order have convinced you of the opposite.

This is a different debate. The original motion focused on two main elements: the opinions of the three Liberal premiers' administrations and on the introduction of user fees.

This amendment totally shifts the debate to a different subject. Based on the citation from the member from Winnipeg, the Chair clearly has no choice but to rule it out of order.

Madam Deputy Speaker: I ask for the indulgence of the House to take into consideration for a little while longer the new arguments which have been brought to me. I will come back to the House in a few minutes.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Ronald J. Duhamel (St. Boniface): Madam Speaker, normally I would be very glad to take part in such a debate. But today I have mixed feelings. Why?

[*English*]

As I indicated, I am usually quite enthused about participating in a discussion such as this one. Today, it is not really the case.

Intellectually I want to talk about the problem, but I am also angry because the motion, with all due respect to my colleagues, some of whom I respect a great deal, is particularly petty. It is a motion that takes a singularly important issue to Canadians, the health care of all Canadians, and trivializes it.

• (1230)

It debases it. It makes it totally, completely, uniquely political by trying to identify three Liberal premiers as the victims, if you wish, those who have perpetuated this. I am really disappointed.

Why has the NDP not talked about the real problem, the cause of where we are today and what we might be able to do in terms of something constructive and positive and respond to the health needs of all Canadians?

We all know that all provinces have been adversely affected. We all know that is as a result of the federal cutbacks, but there are other reasons as well and I shall go into them. Why did my colleagues from the New Democratic Party single out just Liberal premiers? Why did they not single out actions by the Saskatchewan government, an NDP government, I might add? Let me quote from an article dated today: "Saskatchewan cuts social spending". I want to quote from a Canadian press article: "The Saskatchewan government is cutting \$115 million in funding for hospitals, schools and municipalities". It goes on. It warned yesterday that the provincial budget will include even deeper cuts. Why did they not mention the New Democratic Party of Saskatchewan, the New Democratic Government of Saskatchewan?

What has Bob Rae's NDP government done in a province that has been among the better-off financially, recognizing that it has had problems? Let me quote from