

Federal-Provincial Fiscal Arrangements Act

speak out and has spoken out on a number of occasions in favour of his constituents. Is it any wonder that he is such a popular Member of Parliament in his own area because he has the courage to stand up and speak? Why are Conservative Members opposite so silent?

Mr. Gagliano: Mr. Speaker, I want to thank my colleague for asking me his question. I was trying during my speech to find why when Conservative Members were in opposition they were saying the exact opposite to what this Bill will do now. I have quotations of what Members said in opposition in 1982 other than the Minister of Finance (Mr. Wilson) whom I quoted before. Let me now quote what the Minister of Employment and Immigration (Miss MacDonald) said in 1982 during the debate on the six and five:

[*Translation*]

"Perhaps these repercussions are not immediately obvious to the federal Government, but they are to thousands of post-secondary students and certain people who teach in our community colleges and universities. In fact they are alarming. The Government is quite prepared to compromise the future of young people and that of other people who are working now but who would need training or recycling courses. What became obvious to me this morning when I listened to the Minister's speech is that the Government has lost sight of reality and does not seem to be aware of the growing crisis in Canadian post-secondary institutions. She does not seem to know what is going on".

This can be found on page 824 of *Hansard* and these remarks were made by the Minister of Employment and Immigration (Miss MacDonald), the Hon. Member for Kingston and the Islands.

If I may, Mr. Speaker, I can go on quoting another Member, the Hon. Member for Mississauga South (Mr. Blenkarn): "These particular programs, health care and education, are within the provincial sphere. To wind up saying somehow, somewhere along the line, in order to solve an inflation problem you can go ahead and rip apart that agreement without any justification whatsoever, and then rip apart that agreement a year and a half after you start your alleged six and five program to solve an inflation problem you already declare has been solved, is such balderdash to come from a Minister that the Minister himself should resign for even saying it." This appears on page 816, Mr. Speaker. There was no reason to change these agreements at the time, but today hardly 20 months after the election, after promising they would co-operate and consult with the provinces, they completely forgot the consultation process and the arrangements with the provinces and introduced Bill C-96 so that the provinces will lose \$8 billion over five years.

[*English*]

Mr. Len Hopkins (Renfrew—Nipissing—Pembroke): Mr. Speaker, I rise to participate in this debate on Bill C-96. It is very important to point out two things first, the devastating effect this Bill will have on provincial financing, particularly in

the areas of post-secondary education and medicare. It will not only have a severe effect in those two areas, but it will have an offshoot effect upon many other items that have to be financed at the provincial and the municipal levels of Government in Canada. Second, Bill C-96 goes to the very root of the credibility of the Minister of Finance (Mr. Wilson) for Canada. It goes to the very root of the credibility of this entire Government and its members, the largest number of members any government Party has ever had in Canadian history, and the biggest disappointment.

Why do I say it goes to the very root of the credibility of the Minister of Finance? You have heard the quote before, Mr. Speaker, but I am going to repeat it again because all Canadians should know just how much credibility this Minister of Finance has and how much credibility the Government has. On March 23, 1982, when the Minister of Finance sat in the opposition he stated, referring to the federal Liberal Government of the day:

The only sign it shows of cutting spending is by shifting the burden of the established programs funding on to the provincial governments. The provinces are now moving into a deficit position, a position which will make it more difficult for them to finance this shift in spending.—That is not co-operative federalism. That is predatory federalism, and it will not and cannot work in this country.

When the Minister of Finance said that in this House on March 23, 1982, I wonder how he ever thought he would get around to introducing a Bill like this one on established programs funding in Canada, meaning the transfer of federal moneys to the provinces for medicare and post-secondary education. After having made the succinct statement that it was not co-operative federalism but predatory federalism to do this terrible thing to the provinces he has now introduced Bill C-96. He is doing the very thing which he criticized in 1982 when he was in Opposition. That is why I say this Bill goes to the very root of the credibility of the Minister of Finance and the entire Government.

• (1300)

For example, in 1986-87 alone this Bill will cost my home Province of Ontario \$114 million. In 1987-88, it will cost the Province of Ontario \$243.4 million. In 1988-89, the Province of Ontario will get \$387.5 million less of federal Government sharing. In 1989-90, the federal Government will pass on a deduction of \$546.3 million to Ontario. The province will have to make up that difference. In 1990-91, this Bill will cost Ontario \$722.2 million, and in 1991-92, it will cost the province \$916.6 million, for a total of \$2,929 billion. The Province of Ontario will lose almost \$3 billion. Owing to its industrial base and large population, Ontario contributes more than any other province to the federal Government. The taxpayers of Ontario pay more than those of any other province. A lot of money from central Canada is used to help medicare and post-secondary education programs across the country. We feel that is correct. That is a Liberal plan which was in place and which is being replaced by this Bill.