

most. Surely this is the time and place for investment, not for the kind of discouragement which this Bill is bringing. If Canada really wants to maintain its standard of living and be more than a mere supplier of natural resources for other industrialized countries, we must develop our own technology. We must always ensure that we possess a competitive edge above other countries. Without enough highly trained people, without human resources, that will be impossible. Universities are without doubt the major training ground for these people.

● (1500)

This point was clearly emphasized in the brief presented to the Macdonald Royal Commission by the Canadian Association of University Teachers:

Education, in general and university education in particular, has been one of the major factors in the economic growth of the country. The universities of Canada produce the highly qualified personnel needed for today's technological society. The universities perform much of Canada's research and development activity and the universities remain the most significant institutions dedicated to studies in the humanities, arts and basic sciences.

It must be recognized that high technology will not affect only professionals; it will stretch out into every activity and every part of the work force. Nothing will be more directly touched than the work place of the future. It is projected that in the near future people will change jobs probably four or five times during their working life due to technological innovation and change. More and more people will need to be trained and re-educated to be able to move from one job to another. There will be increasing pressures on post-secondary institutions, not only in terms of numbers of people attending, but in terms of the programs offered and the support services needed.

What do we have today? We have the Government trying for a savings of \$380 million over two years at the expense of allowing the quality of life in Canada to continue to decline. It thinks nothing whatsoever of spending equally large amounts on industries which can never recover, or of trying for bail-outs which will never succeed. During this time of what I have said is necessary restraint, the Government has chosen the worst possible vehicle to use as a means to that restraint. It chose post-secondary institutions. Future generations will pay the cost of the folly of the Government.

I realize I only have a couple of minutes remaining, but I would like to sum up by using the words of the Canadian Association of University Teachers in its presentation to the Macdonald Commission wherein it said:

—there is a funding crisis in the universities. Current levels of funding are inadequate to meet national goals similar to those of our major competitors, yet both levels of government have decreased their commitment to fund higher education. The result is a steady decline in the quality of scientific equipment and libraries and a serious loss of morale on the part of professors. This crisis must be addressed by proper funding by both levels of government and by an end to the destructive and mindless quarrel between the federal Government and the provinces over joint funding mechanisms.

Its final statement reads as follows:

As we move into the 21st century, how we deal with our universities, their faculty and their students, will in large measure, determine Canada's position in the next century.

Established Programs Financing

There are many places where money can and should be saved, a point which the Auditor General makes abundantly clear each year. Scrimping on post-secondary education is surely not the answer. Ask the students who need the training, ask the institutions which need the resources, ask the business community which is crying out for trained personnel. They will tell you that this Bill is not the answer. Only a government so out of step with the current and future needs of this country would, to its shame, introduce a Bill of this nature.

Mr. Blenkarn: Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask the Hon. Member a question. She alleged that I made certain errors in my calculations with respect to the determination of the reduction in cash. Would the Hon. Member confirm that in 1983-84 the reduction in cash is \$118 million, which reduces the base for 1983-84, so that when 1984-85 is calculated we will be calculating at a \$118 million smaller base, and the effect of that calculation will be to reduce the total cash by another \$260 million. Is that correct?

Miss MacDonald: Mr. Speaker, the Hon. Member for Mississauga South (Mr. Blenkarn) has defined it very clearly and correctly. The base for the current fiscal year is reduced. That means that the amount of transfers of money for the next fiscal year is further reduced and that over the period of the two years when the six and five proposition is put into effect by the federal Government, if it should have its way, a total amount of \$380 million is being taken out of the system which would otherwise have been there.

Mr. Blenkarn: As a matter of clarification, the amount of the transfer of cash is reduced twice. Does that reduction stay in effect forever because the base reduced forever?

Miss MacDonald: Of course that is not made at all clear in the Bill. The reduction of the base is there. It would have to be brought in and re-established at the point it was in 1982-83 or at the beginning of 1983 in order to bring it back to the level it was before the imposition of this Bill. The tax base would be permanently reduced unless that change were made at the expiration of this Bill. I trust it will be another government dealing with that particular point.

Mr. Cullen: Mr. Speaker, we have heard the debate on the block funding aspect. The Hon. Member for New Westminster-Coquitlam indicated situations where \$12 million was taken out and used for some other procedure or where money which was sent for education was used for building roads. She said that maybe we cannot blame the federal Government totally for the fact that when we send more money it is simply diverted to other uses.

Is the Hon. Member in a position to tell us what is the position of the Conservative Party? Does she feel that there should be an accounting by the provinces, or does she agree with the block funding procedure?

Miss MacDonald: Mr. Speaker, if the Hon. Member who was here in 1977 would look back at the *Debates* at that time, he would see that when I spoke on that Bill on behalf of my