

welcome this—by the government of Canada in its generous funding provisions under clause six of this bill, the federal government would like to be done with this and would rather transfer these funds under, really, a points system leaving the provinces free to develop in ten tidy, watertight compartments that which surely must not be compartmentalized these days, that is, the thrust and policy development of post-secondary education in our country. This is the plea: I hope that within the next 24 months serious attention will be paid to this problem.

I do not say this in any threatening way, but I suggest it will be a great disservice to this country, one which members on the government side, certainly many among the official opposition and, I am sure, members to my left, if the federal government feels it can in this way discharge its constitutional responsibility in funding and supporting national goals in respect of post-secondary education. This responsibility cannot be discharged by mere transfer of a few tax points. Obviously these are days when national goals must not only be developed but must be fostered. I say that should the government think it can discharge its undoubted responsibilities by merely transferring income tax points, then, as distinguished Senator Eugene Forsey has said, many of us will want to tear the purple off the cloths.

**Mr. John Burton (Regina East):** Mr. Speaker, I listened carefully to the comments of the hon. member for Fundy-Royal (Mr. Fairweather). Most of us share the concern he expressed about future government policy respecting the financing and funding of educational institutions.

Attention must, however, be paid to the terms of the motion which is before us. I am at a loss to understand what members of the official opposition wish to accomplish by the wording of the amendment. As I see it, they propose to weaken clause 32 which gives the governor in council power to make regulations. They intend to remove therefrom the power to make regulations which define the expressions "junior matriculation," "post-secondary level," "assisted, sponsored or contract research," and "operating expenditures." The amendment proposes to omit a general, catch-all provision at the end of clause 32 which would enable the governor in council to make regulations carrying into effect the purposes and provisions of the act.

There may be some logical explanation for this, but it seems to me that simply to remove the power to make regulations or to define these expressions and terms which are important in carrying out the provisions of the act would leave a gap in the legislation. It seems to me there ought to have been another amendment defining those expressions if in fact it was the intention of the official opposition to ensure that there would be no tampering with the definitions.

At the same time, I should like to make it clear that we share some of the concern he has expressed about the involvement of the federal government in the financing of post-secondary and other educational programs. The federal government has become involved in these programs over a number of years, during which it has contributed in a special way to the cost of education in Canada. An attempt has been made to do this in a way which does not

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interfere with the constitutional prerogative of the provinces in the area of education.

Because of the federal structure of our country and because the federal government has the resources at its command with which to finance the cost of education in Canada in something approaching an equitable fashion, we must be concerned about the future of this program. The federal government entered these programs and its action in doing so was generally welcomed. This does not mean there was necessarily agreement as to the particulars of the proposals made by the federal government when it entered this field; nevertheless, there was a large measure of agreement with the decision made by the government some years ago to enter the field and contribute toward the cost of financing.

In the meantime there have not been any basic changes to the financial structure and revenue raising arrangements in Canada or the division of revenue raising power as between the federal government and the provinces. What lies ahead? There is every indication that the federal government is seeking ways and means of limiting its contribution to the financing of these shared programs. We should like the federal government to state clearly what its intentions are for the future.

Statements made before the committee indicated that some of the shared-cost programs are under negotiation and that various proposals are being discussed. This is fine; no one would object to this sort of discussion. At the same time, we would appreciate a clearer indication of what the federal government intends to do. Do some of the proposals it is making at the present time represent merely a negotiating stance, or do they really represent a studied policy for Canada? I hope we shall hear more from government spokesmen on these matters while the motion is under consideration.

**Hon. P. M. Mahoney (Minister of State):** Mr. Speaker, as usual I find myself in a very agreeable frame of mind when dealing with propositions put forward by the hon. member for Fundy-Royal (Mr. Fairweather). Certainly, the desirability of federal participation in the financing of post-secondary education is not questioned.

I searched the hon. member's comments for some support of the amendment to which he was speaking, and I must say I searched in vain. I suppose I share the mystification which the hon. member for Regina East (Mr. Burton) expressed in that connection. The provisions which the amendment seeks to delete are essential to the operation of this program. They deal with the power to make regulations under the act.

The intent of the provision respecting post-secondary education transfer of funds is to provide financing to each of the provinces equivalent to 50 per cent of the eligible operating expenditures incurred by post-secondary institutions. The transfer is unconditional, which is to say that the provinces can use the money in any way they see fit. But the amount to be transferred, the quantum of the transfer, is based on the 50 per cent formula, or in the case of New Brunswick, Prince Edward Island and Newfoundland on a \$15 per capita escalated amount.