

Government Orders

government borrowed \$24.55 billion. Some of that money belonged to the previous administration and some was overlapping into the next administration. In 1985-86 this government borrowed another \$18.2 billion.

I want to remind you, Madam Speaker, that this comes from a government that said it was going to cut the deficit of this country and get the finances under control. The Minister of Finance said in August 1984 that he was not going to raise taxes to do this. He was simply going to cut government programs. That shows how much he understood about government then and he obviously has not learned a great deal since.

In 1986-87 this government borrowed \$22.6 billion. Then again in 1986-87 it borrowed \$3.6 billion and in addition to that in 1987-88 it borrowed \$24.3 billion. In 1988-89 it borrowed \$25.3 billion. In 1989-90 it borrowed \$750 million. Today the government is asking for another \$25.5 billion. All this totals approximately \$190 billion. This from a government that was going to show a great example of financial management. That is what the government said to Canadians in 1984. The Minister of Finance is still in dream-land. He has still not learned what is going on around him, because he still says he is going to do it. I will have a little more to say about those figures later on.

The government is passing its debt. The government has learned one thing, and that is how to pass its debt. It has learned how to pass its responsibilities for government. It has learned how to pass the buck to provincial and municipal governments. That is the one thing it has learned.

In 1982 the Minister of Finance thought that the federal government should not reduce its deficit on the backs of the provinces. That was in 1982, when he was sitting over here in the opposition. He said this, and I quote: "Let us not make hospitals, universities and colleges a battleground between the federal government and the provincial governments". He also said that consultations were imperative before there were any budget cuts. We know what has happened to consultation under this government.

In August 1989 the Prime Minister said—and this is rather ironic because this was a statement of the Prime Minister of Canada—and I quote:

This government will carry its fair share of the burden to ensure that all young Canadians receive a first-class education as they confront a world-class challenge.

Instead the Prime Minister has confronted young people of this country with a first-class challenge, because we all know that in the recent budget the Minister of Finance has cut drastically funds to the provinces for post-secondary education and medicare.

The cuts or the freezing of federal spending in transfer payments or Established Programs Financing indicate that it is only a matter of time before Ottawa will no longer pay a single cent for medicare or higher education in any of the provinces. That is what we have under this government. That, Madam Speaker, is why this government must be changed. This would result in Ottawa losing its ability to enforce minimum standards of accessibility and equity in two of Canada's most vital social policy areas, namely, education and medicare.

• (1230)

This government is famous for passing costs back to the provinces, and in effect putting the onus right down to the individual taxpayers who will end up with the expense. Provincial taxes will increase to make up for the cuts in the transfer payments to the provinces. I know you will not believe this, Madam Speaker, because you are a lady with a very fine and kind heart, but the cuts in transfer payments to the provinces equal \$576 per taxpayer over the next five years.

The Unemployment Insurance Commission was originally transferred to the federal government in order to ease the financial burdens of the provinces and the municipalities, many of which went broke during the Depression years of the early thirties. The Rowell-Sirois commission report that followed stated that its financial proposals were designed to enable every province of Canada to rely on having sufficient revenue at its command to carry out the functions entrusted to it.

When they transferred the burden of the unemployed from the provincial and the municipal governments over to the federal Government of Canada they made the