

national debt. What happens when that figure reaches 75 per cent or 90 per cent? It is obvious that most Government departments would be irrelevant. They will no longer be required. Parliament itself will not have much of a function. We would probably need only one government Department and one government agency. We would need Taxation Canada to collect the money and transfer it to the Bank of Canada, which would disburse it to those people who were fortunate enough to own government bonds of one kind or another or treasury bills. That is what would be called the Government of Canada.

The situation is serious and I have to agree with the Minister that the deficit is serious. What we need is a national program. We need all political Parties, all publicly-elected people from the municipal through the provincial and federal level, to co-operate to do something about our burgeoning national debt.

That brings me back to Bill C-96. Is it really the answer, as proposed by the Minister of Finance, simply to take a portion of the federal deficit and transfer it to the provinces? I find that very difficult to accept as a reasonable solution, but not all Hon. Members agree with me.

For example, yesterday or the day before the Hon. Member for Winnipeg—St. James (Mr. Minaker), who is a government supporter and a former member of the Manitoba Legislature, argued that the provinces have some responsibility for restraining their expenditures. I found that argument a bit puzzling. I am not aware, and I certainly stand to be corrected, of a single province that is not taking some action to restrain its own expenditures. I think there is a consciousness in all of the provincial capitals that they must do what they can do to control their own deficits.

The Member for Winnipeg—St. James went on to argue that with Bill C-96 we are not cutting back at all because there will still be increases. He argued that there will not be decreases, there will be increases, so really there are no cut-backs.

That is a fatuous argument. We know there is in place now an agreement between the provinces and the federal Government. I thought these agreements were binding, but apparently they can be broken arbitrarily. They can be broken unilaterally. That bothers me because the Party opposite now in power argued that that should not be done. More than that I am bothered because two aspects of our national life, post-secondary education and health, will certainly suffer as a result of Bill C-96.

I would like to ask Members on the government side whether they believe that post-secondary education in Canada is overfunded. Is post-secondary education receiving an unduly large share of the amount of financial resources that are available? I took a careful look at that matter, and discovered that from 1977 to 1985 there was a very large increase in the enrolment, 27 per cent in our universities, over that period of

time. In the colleges, the increase was even more significant, that is, 36 per cent.

How much additional funds flowed from the federal Government during that period of time to offset the increases? Government support increased by only 2.5 per cent. I am talking here about an actual increase. We have to take into account inflation. You cannot add that in because it means that higher salaries to keep up with inflation and operating costs of universities and colleges have to match inflation. This was an actual increase over and above inflation of 2.5 per cent, but it does not square with the increased demands placed on our post-secondary institutions.

Mr. Ed Anderson, President of the Canadian Association of University Teachers, said:

Proposed federal cuts to post-secondary education could place a university education beyond the reach of many students.

There is a basic problem with Bill C-96. It is unfair, it is arbitrary and, if I can conclude with just a short quote, let me say that I agree with *The Telegraph Journal* which wrote:

It is essential that the deficit be reduced and it is essential that the burden of the deficit be spread fairly across Canada and all regions of Canada. What the federal Government is doing does not ensure such fairness in the sharing of the burden.

*The Telegraph Journal* wrote this with respect to Bill C-96.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski):** It being five o'clock, the House will now proceed to the consideration of Private Members' Business as listed on today's Order Paper.

● (1700)

## PRIVATE MEMBERS' BUSINESS--PUBLIC BILLS

[English]

### CRIMINAL CODE

#### AMENDMENT RESPECTING LEGAL COUNSEL FOR UNBORN CHILD

The House resumed consideration of the motion of Mr. O'Neil Bill C-254, an Act to amend the Criminal Code (legal counsel for unborn child), be read the second time and referred to a legislative committee.

**Mr. Pat Binns (Cardigan):** Mr. Speaker, I rise to speak on Bill C-254 which I consider to be a very important Bill in that it deals with the protection of the unborn child. I believe that if the proposed amendment to the Criminal Code were adopted we would see a strengthening of the protection of the unborn child.

As a Member, I have chosen to speak on this Bill because I think it is very important. It is a subject which evokes very strong feelings in most Canadians. I am sure that my rising to speak on the Bill will cause concern for some of my constituents who will disagree with my views. Nevertheless, I feel a