

predatory federalism, and it will not and cannot work in this country”.

Mr. Speaker, if it couldn't work in 1982, how can the present Minister of Finance, the same Member, suggest this solution in 1986? Does this make sense? Could anyone on the Government side, any Minister or Government Member rise in the House today and tell us why it wasn't co-operative federalism but predatory federalism in 1982, and today... what is it supposed to be? What kind of federalism is the Conservative Government going to give us with Bill C-69, Mr. Speaker? On March 24, 1982, Mr. Speaker, in the same debate on the 6 and 5 inflation reduction program, the present Minister of Finance, at the time the official Opposition finance critic, said: "Taking the action of unilaterally cutting the financing, which the Government is now proposing, and then having some discussions with the provinces, surely puts the cart before the horse. We should be reversing this procedure". And now we have the exact opposite, Mr. Speaker. He makes a decision and doesn't even talk about it.

Mr. Speaker, in concluding, I would like to quote—you have indicated I have only a few minutes left—Justice Hall's definition of illness, for which financing to the provinces is being cut by the Conservative Government in Bill C-96, and I quote:

● (1240)

[*English*]

—that the trauma of illness, the pain of surgery, the slow decline to death, are burdens enough for the human beings to bear without the added burden of medical or hospital bills penalizing the patient at the moment of vulnerability. The Canadian people determined that they should band together to pay medical bills and hospital bills when they were well and income earning. Health services were no longer items to be bought off the shelf and paid for at the checkout stand.

Nor was their price to be bargained for at the time they were sought. They were a fundamental need like education, which Canadians could meet collectively and pay through taxes.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Speaker, it is clear this definition says the exact opposite of Bill C-96, the legislation the Conservative Government wants to impose on Canadians.

[*English*]

Mr. Nunziata: Mr. Speaker, you will have noted that we have been debating Bill C-96 in the House for approximately two hours. As you also know, many other hours have preceded today's debate in respect of the Bill. However, during the course of the two-hour period today, we have not heard from one Conservative Member of Parliament, either to make a speech or to ask questions. For example, I note in the House the Hon. Member for York East (Mr. Redway), the Hon. Member for Edmonton—Strathcona (Mr. Kilgour), the Hon. Member for Dartmouth—Halifax East (Mr. Forrestall), the Hon. Member for Capilano (Mrs. Collins), the Minister of Communications (Mr. Masse), and the Minister of Veterans Affairs (Mr. Hees). We are not hearing from them today in respect of this Bill, not even a whimper.

Federal-Provincial Fiscal Arrangements Act

I have a question for my hon. friend and colleague who delivered one of the finest speeches I have heard him give in the House. Why is it that Conservative Members of Parliament are not standing to defend this particular piece of legislation? Is it because this regressive piece of legislation is indefensible, in that they cannot rise in the House and justify it, or is it because they do not care? I cannot believe for a moment that it is because they do not care, but indeed it is strange that we have silence on the Conservative side of the House.

Canadians have memories which go back a few years. They recall quite specifically when Members opposite would rise and criticize the previous Government in respect of these two particular issues. Where are those voices today, I would ask my friend. Did the Member for York East stand up in caucus and outline to his colleagues, specifically the Minister of Finance (Mr. Wilson), the impact the cut-backs would have in the Province of Ontario? Did the Minister of Communications stand up in Cabinet to point out to his colleague, the Minister of Finance, and his other cabinet colleagues the devastating impact the cut-backs would have in his own Province of Quebec? And the Hon. Member for Dartmouth—Halifax East, did he, as the Parliamentary Secretary, stand up at caucus and tell his colleagues what negative impact there would be in his home Province of Nova Scotia? Then there is the Hon. Member for Capilano who sits opposite and prides herself in speaking out in a very vigorous and aggressive fashion in the House of Commons. Did she stand up in caucus and tell her colleagues what impact Bill C-96 would have in the Province of British Columbia, her province and my province of birth? Did she stand up for the people of her riding of Capilano and for all the people in British Columbia? Did she speak out in favour of post-secondary education? Did the Hon. Member for Edmonton—Strathcona stand up in caucus and speak out against Bill C-96? Did he speak up for his constituents, not only in his riding but for all the people in Edmonton and in the Province of Alberta?

● (1250)

Given the silence today, it appears that the Conservative Members have not spoken out for their respective constituencies or for their respective provinces. They are allowing the Minister of Finance to wreak havoc in their constituencies. I ask them through you, Mr. Speaker, to speak out. They were elected to represent constituencies and provinces.

Those Members should stand up and tell the people of Canada why as Conservative Members of Parliament they support Bill C-96. They should have the courage to stand up and tell the people of Canada and their constituents why they do not support Bill C-96.

My question to my friend and colleague is, why are Conservative Members opposite not standing up to ask questions or expressing their concerns about this legislation? I know the Hon. Member for Glengarry—Prescott—Russell (Mr. Boudria), who is presently preparing his submission, intends to