

Motion agreed to, Bill read the second time and the House went into Committee thereon, Mr. Danis in the chair.

Clauses 1 to 3 inclusive agreed to.

Preamble agreed to.

Title agreed to.

Bill agreed to.

Bill reported.

Mr. O'Neil moved that the Bill be concurred in.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the said motion?

Some Hon. Members: Agreed.

Motion agreed to.

Mr. O'Neil moved that the Bill be read the third time and passed.

Motion agreed to and Bill read the third time and passed.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Pursuant to order made earlier this day, this House stands adjourned for 20 minutes until 7 o'clock tonight.

At 6.40 p.m. the sitting of the House was suspended.

SITTING RESUMED

The House resumed at 7 p.m.

GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[English]

FEDERAL-PROVINCIAL FISCAL ARRANGEMENTS AND FEDERAL POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION AND HEALTH CONTRIBUTIONS ACT

MEASURE TO AMEND

The House resumed consideration of the motion of Mr. Wilson (Etobicoke Centre) that Bill C-96, an Act to amend the Federal-Provincial Fiscal Arrangements and Federal Post-Secondary Education and Health Contributions Act, 1977, be read the third time and passed.

Mr. Nunziata: Questions or comments, Mr. Speaker?

Mr. Deputy Speaker: There is a period for questions and comments, but the Hon. Member for Eglinton—Lawrence (Mr. de Corneille), who made the speech, is not in the House. Therefore, according to previous rulings by the Speaker, there will be no question and comment period. Resuming debate with the Hon. Member for Hamilton East (Ms. Copps).

Ms. Sheila Copps (Hamilton East): Mr. Speaker, I am glad we are back on the main business before the House. I realize that Private Members' Business is very important, but it was

Federal-Provincial Fiscal Arrangements Act

said by a number of spokespersons here today, and unfortunately we have not heard much from the Government side, that this legislation is probably the single most significant piece of legislation to cross the desks of all Hon. Members in the last two years. I am very happy to see the Minister of Finance (Mr. Wilson) in the House because he will remember some of the statements he made back in his lowly days in opposition.

I think, for example, back to March 24, 1982, when the then opposition Member for Etobicoke Centre was speaking about the then Liberal Government's decision with respect to Established Programs Financing. At that time he had some pretty strong words to say about the importance of sustaining a level of federal funding that would permit our colleges and universities and our health system to flourish. He 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.

Again, on March 23, 1982, in speaking about cut-backs to EPF transfers, the Minister said:

The only sign it shows of cutting spending is by shifting the burden of the established programs funding on to the provincial governments. The provinces are now moving into a deficit position, a position which will make it more difficult for them to finance this shift in spending . . . That is not co-operative federalism. That is predatory federalism and it will not and cannot work in this country.

Yet we see tonight in its typical ramrod approach the Government, under the alleged leadership of the self-same Minister of Finance, is planning to move a motion which, in a predatory fashion, will cut back future increases in Established Programs Financing to the provinces by some \$8 billion.

Those of us who had an opportunity during the small break a few moments ago to watch the six o'clock news will know that in Ontario the issue of health care is uppermost in the minds of many Ontarians. The Ontario Government, following the lead of a unanimous resolution called the Canada Health Act in the federal Parliament, moved to exercise its authority in the province to ensure that it is not penalized by a \$15 million cut in funds which would have resulted if the province had not banned extra billing. The previous Liberal federal Government set the lead when, with the unanimous support of the Conservatives and the NDP, a motion known as the Canada Health Act was passed. That motion said to every single Canadian man and woman, regardless of provincial or territorial Governments, that they have a right to accessible and free health care in Canada.

Mr. Deans: Not free.

Ms. Copps: I think what highlights the history of concern in Canada is to look at the health care system as it has developed in the U.S., for example. There it has developed in a kind of piecemeal private sector fashion. Here in Canada we have developed a universally accessible system for all Canadians. Unfortunately, not only has the federal Government been strangely silent on the question of universal access in the Province of Ontario, but again it has said nothing when the Canadian Medical Association suggested to its members