

Established Programs Financing

federal Government as being culpable in the confusion which surrounds the whole question of post-secondary education.

Therefore, I suggest it is evident that we are not playing politics with this issue because we moved a number of amendments which, taken together, provide an equitable approach to the question. The Hon. Member, who accused us of playing politics, is the one who, with his incredibly select interpretation of our criticism of Bill C-12, gave a very adverse political analysis of our position and thus contradicted himself.

● (1550)

Speaking to the substance of the amendment, I would have thought it would go without saying that all Members would want to indicate that any money transferred to the province for a particular purpose should be spent on that purpose. It may not be the case with the Province of New Brunswick. I do not have the most current figures, but I know it has been the case that certain provinces have spent less in total on post-secondary education than what was transferred to them by the federal Government for that purpose. In other words, the federal contribution in a couple of provinces has sometimes been over 100 per cent of what has been spent by those provinces on post-secondary education. Again, to be fair, lest I lapse into a purely political analysis, that has something to do with the arbitrary nature of the division of the transfers into one-third for post-secondary education and two-thirds for hospital and medical care. It is the case that there are some provinces in which the federal Government always paid more than 50 per cent, in which the federal government always carried, right from the beginning of the serious development of post-secondary education facilities in those provinces, a heavier burden than it carried in some other provinces.

There has been some confusion as to who is living up to what expectation as a result of the arbitrary division, which was made in 1977, but of the total EPF transfer, two-thirds seem to be allocated for health care and one-third seems to be allocated for post-secondary education. That confusion and what arises from it was acknowledged in the special parliamentary task force report on federal-provincial fiscal arrangements entitled *Fiscal Federalism*, a committee on which I sat in 1981. But one of the things to which everyone was agreeable was the idea that there ought to be more accountability. The amendment which the Hon. Member for New Westminster-Coquitlam has moved on behalf of the NDP makes that point. That is the only point trying to be made by this amendment. There was absolutely no good reason, except obvious partisan reasons or perhaps confusion on the part of the Hon. Member from New Brunswick, to imply either that this was the only criticism that was ever made of Bill C-12 and, therefore, it was completely unbalanced, which is not true, and, as I said, it is part and parcel of a number of amendments and criticisms, or to imply that we somehow view the provincial governments as the only ones to be blamed for the crisis in post-secondary education. We hold neither of the views which the Hon. Member attributed to us.

I hope that in future if the Hon. Member wants to get up and accuse others of simply playing politics with the issue, he will take more care to be even-handed, to be well informed, to read our speeches and to know what we have said. Then he can comment on what we have actually said. We are quite prepared to defend what we have said. If there is something he does not like about what we have moved and what we have said about Bill C-12, then let him get up and say so. Let him not just comfort himself with being able to get up and be eloquent about things that are not there, knock down straw men and use that wonderful voice of his to criticize things that are not there.

Mr. McLean: There's the birds nest of Birds Hill.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Herbert): Is the House ready for the question?

Some Hon. Members: Question.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Herbert): Ms. Jewett, seconded by Mr. Blaikie moves:

That Bill C-12 be amended in clause 8 by adding immediately after line 25 at page 7 the following:

any such cash contribution for hospital insurance and medical care programs and post-secondary program shall be expended by the province for the purposes of those programs only.

Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: Agreed.

Some Hon. Members: No.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Herbert): All those in favour of the motion will please say yea.

Some Hon. Members: Yea.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Herbert): All those opposed will please say nay.

Some Hon. Members: Nay.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Herbert): In my opinion, the nays have it.

And more than five Members having risen:

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Herbert): Pursuant to section 11 of Standing Order 79, a recorded division on the proposed motion stands deferred.

Mr. Epp: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. You will know that Motion No. 5 which stands in the name of my colleague, the Hon. Member for Kingston and the Islands (Miss MacDonald), was ruled not acceptable by the Chair earlier this afternoon.

If you can find consent in the House, and I believe there is consent, there have been discussions and negotiations, I would be willing to move an amendment which covers the subject matter of Motion No. 5. This amendment has found favour, I believe, with the Government as well as with the New Demo-