

proved, as I have stated since becoming Secretary of State, that those fears are groundless. In particular, I believe the advertisements by the Conservative Party in campus newspapers did a great disservice to students in colleges and universities by raising such needless fears. I also say, from the point of view of practical politics, that the Conservative Party was shortsighted because they have harmed their credibility on the campus to a considerable degree as a result of the students discovering that these were groundless claims.

● (1620)

The federal strategy for strengthening its support of post-secondary education in the eighties can be stated under three headings. The first heading is strengthening federal programs and policies directed to specific national objectives, particularly in providing Canadians with the knowledges and skills needed to exploit the many opportunities offered by our developing economy, in strengthening support of research, in strengthening programs related to official languages in education and to Canadian knowledge, and in support of students and trainees with respect to accessibility, equity and mobility.

The second heading is maintaining a significant level of federal indirect support of the post-secondary infrastructure through the provinces, the students, and the institutions when this is appropriate, given the nature of the federal role. Such indirect support would be provided in a way that ensures accountability to the Parliament of Canada and that money from federal taxpayers is used in the manner indicated. There have been cases where, unfortunately, this has not occurred. I believe that in the negotiations with reference to the future of post-secondary education and the financing thereof in this country, these are matters that must be strengthened and stressed by the Government of Canada.

The third heading is strengthening the mechanisms for effective decision-making and wider participation.

I wonder if I might now comment on each of the elements of this strategy. The first element I referred to is to strengthen federal support of manpower, social and other specific national objectives.

In his presentation to the Parliamentary Task Force on Federal-Provincial Relations, the then secretary of state began the process of defining specific national objectives. The national objectives that should go with federal participation in the cost of post-secondary education that he identified at that time have been well received and appeared to be a solid base on which to build federal policy and programs in the eighties. I intend in the near future to issue a somewhat revised statement of objectives that takes into account the comments we received on those that had been previously made and which I think will provide for more public input into our approach. I then plan to consult with interested groups and individuals with respect to these revised objectives, with respect to the basic principles that underlie federal policy and programs in support of post-secondary education, and also with respect to other matters relating to the achievement of national objectives in the area of education and human resource development.

### *The Budget—Mr. Regan*

In some areas we are already starting the process of strengthening federal programs in support of these national objectives. A federal-provincial task force has already identified ways in which student aid programs need improvement. I will be meeting soon with my provincial counterparts to discuss federal official languages in education programs. Development will continue in these areas along with an over-all review of all federal programs in support of human resource development.

The second element of the strategy is to maintain strong federal support of the post-secondary infrastructure. The achievement of human resource development objectives ultimately rests on strong, autonomous and flexible colleges and universities, on a post-secondary system which itself has the incentives and means to provide opportunity for the development of individual talent and the pursuit of national objectives.

Given our constitutional arrangements, it is primarily the job of the provinces to provide the needed financing of the post-secondary infrastructure. However, the federal government, in the interests of ensuring a high standard of post-secondary education and training across the country, has over a considerable number of years supported and will continue to support that infrastructure.

This support has been delivered via the provinces, and also through direct support to students and, where appropriate, given the nature of the federal role, to post-secondary institutions themselves. With respect to support via the provinces, the government finds considerable merit in the recommendation of the Parliamentary Task Force on Federal-Provincial Fiscal Arrangements that the post-secondary and health portions of the established programs financing arrangements be separated into individual programs, and that federal financing earmarked for each program area not be used for other purposes. That not only will result in the intentions of those in this House who vote money in approving budgets being carried out, but it will assure Canadians that dollars intended for education are not being diverted at the provincial level for other purposes.

A review is needed of the amount of federal support that should be provided in this way. Under established programs financing, the federal share of post-secondary infrastructure financing has been rising rapidly. In some provinces the provincial share has been decreasing sharply. We must seriously examine arrangements that have the effect of shifting the burden of infrastructure financing away from the provinces, which have primary responsibility for education, and to the federal government.

If an increasing amount of available federal funds is being used in this manner, correspondingly less can be spent on vital national human resource development programs that can by their very nature only be provided by the federal government. The budget notes that unless satisfactory progress is made by March 31, 1983, in jointly developing better federal-provincial arrangements in the areas of education and human resource development, the government could be forced to freeze future per capita EPF cash transfers for post-secondary education at