

Federal-Provincial Fiscal Arrangements Act

Ministers to use when there are good reasons for which they cannot use ordinary flights.

When we talk about the former Government, I can recall that every Minister had to be in the House for every vote because we would not have the majority to carry the votes. In circumstances like that, government airplanes were there to serve the Ministers and permit us to get back to the House in time to vote, yet be able to travel around the country as we were expected.

As I say, unless the airplane is given to the Minister to use—

An Hon. Member: You can say that without laughing.

Mr. Kaplan: I do say so and I am not laughing about it. I do not believe that using a Government airplane for proper purposes is an extravagance. I believe that the airplanes are for the use of Ministers when they cannot handle their public affairs properly with commercial airplanes.

I do not believe the figures used by the Member opposite prove anything that he wants to suggest. The cost of hotels and the amount of entertainment bills are the figures that have just come out about the Government. It is that kind of figure which should be given, not how much time the Minister spent flying in government airplanes.

[Translation]

Mr. Rossi: Mr. Speaker, I listened very carefully to the comments of the Hon. Member for LaSalle (Mr. Lanthier) and the Hon. Member for Lac-Saint-Jean (Mr. Côté) and I can tell you that the Hon. Member for Lac-Saint-Jean did not dare to quote figures because he does not have any.

As for the comments of the Hon. Member for LaSalle, I can tell that he has been absent for a long time because he does not have the latest figures, which include an amount of \$800,000 for the Prime Minister. I challenge you to say that these \$800,000 are included in your figures. You are quoting old statistics and you know it. The same figures have been quoted in this House for eight months. The Conservatives have fewer—

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Charest): Order, please. Order, please.

Mr. Rossi: You are leaving! Give us figures.

Mr. Côté (Lac-Saint-Jean): I am coming back!

Mr. Rossi: The \$800,000 of Mulroney are not included.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Charest): Order, please! Order!

Mr. Rossi: You have no figures. You are always speaking through your hat.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Charest): Order, please! Order!

Mr. Rossi: Give us some figures! You do not have any! Why do you not speak?

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Charest): Order, please. The period for questions and comments has expired.

● (1730)

[English]

Mr. Don Blenkarn (Mississauga South): Mr. Speaker, this Bill involves one of the fiscal arrangements between the federal Government and the provinces. There are extensive fiscal arrangements between the federal Government and the provinces. Indeed—

Mr. Rossi: *Lanthier, tu parles à travers ton chapeau!*

Mr. Blenkarn: Mr. Speaker, does Your Honour think I could possibly have order in this House? Do we have to put up with the kind of yelling and screaming that is going on here?

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Charest): Order, order. As all Hon. Members know—

Mr. Blenkarn: Mr. Speaker, it would be nice if we could have a little bit of decorum in this Chamber.

Mr. Speaker, there are several fiscal arrangements between the federal Government and the provinces. This Bill deals with one of those fiscal arrangements. However, before we go into the whole question of whether this is a terrible, bloodthirsty attack on the moneys that the provinces have to fulfil their constitutional requirements, let us go, for a moment, over the various fiscal arrangements, because they are very substantial.

First, there is equalization, a situation in which the federal Government uses the resources of the country and equalizes those resources among the provinces to ensure that all provinces have equal fiscal capacities, as far as is possible, to perform their constitutional requirements; and there is no change in equalization.

The second arrangement is called the Canada Assistance Plan, one in which the federal Government shares equally, dollar for dollar, with provincial Governments on social assistance programs.

Then there are the tax collection agreements whereby the federal Government acts as a fiscal agent for the provinces to collect taxes for them without any charge whatsoever to the provinces, no charge back at all. The Government collects the money for them and remits it to them without charge as part of the fiscal arrangements of the country.

Then there are tax sharing agreements, and tax agreements whereby the federal Government pays taxes to the provinces for provincial sales tax, for example, those various arrangements that make this country work when there are two taxing authorities. There are a number of other arrangements whereby the federal Government, for example, does things in provincial areas that are really transfers to the provinces for their responsibilities. For example, in post-secondary education, we run a Coast Guard college. We run universities under the Department of National Defence. We make grants to