

*Established Programs Financing*

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Guilbault):** The Chair has heard the amendment, which is in order. Mr. Fulton, seconded by Ms. Jewett—no, Ms. Jewett has spoken in the debate and will not be able to second the motion.

**Mr. Fisher:** No one there to second it.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Guilbault):** Do we have a seconder for the amendment?

**An Hon. Member:** No seconder.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Guilbault):** So we are back on the main motion. The question is as follows: Mr. Lalonde, seconded by Mr. Ouellet, moves:

That Bill C-12, an Act to amend the Federal-Provincial Fiscal Arrangements and Established Programs Financing Act, 1977, be now read the second time and referred to the Standing Committee—

**Mr. Shields:** Mr. Speaker, I was rising to speak on the motion.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Guilbault):** On which motion? On the main motion? The Hon. Member for Athabasca (Mr. Shields).

**Mr. Evans:** I rise on a point of order, Mr. Speaker. If I am not mistaken, Mr. Speaker, you were in the process of putting the main motion. At that time no one can interrupt the Chair. I would suggest the motion has to be put, Mr. Speaker. You started to put the motion and I suggest you have to continue.

**Mr. Shields:** On a point of order, Mr. Speaker, I have been taught in this House that when the Speaker is rising a Member remains seated in his chair. If the Parliamentary Secretary will have observed, a Member of the NDP rose to put his motion; you then stood in your place as you would, Mr. Speaker, and called for a seconder. From that moment on you did not sit; I had no opportunity to rise. In fact, I had to break the decorum of the House to rise and catch your attention to indicate that I did want to speak on the main motion.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Guilbault):** The Hon. Member for Athabasca would have the floor.

**Mr. Jack Shields (Athabasca):** Mr. Speaker, I thank you for the opportunity to speak on Bill C-12 presently before the House.

**Mr. Fisher:** On a point of order, Mr. Speaker, it was my understanding, and I clearly saw it, that you were putting the motion to the House. I heard the point of order raised by the Hon. Member for Athabasca (Mr. Shields) and I sympathize with him, but there are regular procedures in this House. The Speaker has precedence and the Speaker was in fact putting the motion.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Guilbault):** The Parliamentary Secretary in fact is now reflecting on the ruling just made. The Hon. Member for Athabasca is perfectly in his right.

**Mr. Fisher:** No, Sir.

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Guilbault):** I did not sit between disallowing the amendment and reading the main motion. Once an amendment is not accepted by the Chair or cannot be put for lack of a seconder, as was the situation here, we are back on the main motion. Any Member of this House who has not yet spoken on the main motion is allowed to do so. This is the reason I recognized the Hon. Member for Athabasca who has the floor now.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Duquet:** Mr. Speaker, on the same point of order, I am sorry—

**The Acting Speaker (Mr. Guilbault):** Order, please. Decisions of the Chair may not be commented upon. Would the Hon. Member please sit down?

• (1220)

[*English*]

**Mr. Shields:** Mr. Speaker, as I was saying, I am particularly pleased to stand today and speak on Bill C-12, an Act to Amend the Federal-Provincial Fiscal Arrangements and Established Programs Financing Act, 1977. We have watched the present Government continue in a confrontational style of government over the past 10 to 15 years. It has become very obvious that the Government, with the centralist attitude that it has, practises politics that are totally opposite to the type of government which was established in this country to deal with the regions and the hinterland provinces. We have continually seen the Liberal Government unilaterally introduce legislation without prior consultation that has profound effect on every part of the country.

I am getting sick and tired of going back to my riding week after week and hearing people say that the Government is not listening to the people in the regions. We saw this in the national energy policy which was brought forward without consultation with the people of Canada. With the Indian Act we see that the consultative processes are not taking place. In this case the Government is introducing Bill C-12 which changes the formula and reduces the amount of money that the federal Government will transfer to the provinces for post-secondary education, health and medicare.

This has created a problem right across the country, Mr. Speaker. At a time of high unemployment universities are really scratching to get the kind of funds they require to move Canada into the technological age. Up until now we in Canada have had the highest standard of education per capita of any country in the world. There are some provinces which cannot afford to hit the local tax base and ingest the required funds into post-secondary education. I am talking about all kinds of post-secondary institutions. This cash-starved Government, which was supported by the New Democratic Party year after year, went on a reckless spending spree and set up a bureaucracy and system of government that is now, along with the other governments, taking close to 45 or 50 per cent of the Gross National Product. This bureaucracy has gone wild to