You have never had any philosophy or means to develop the human and natural resources of this country. You are nothing but parasites in the society. That is the reason why there will never be any business development under any socialist system anywhere in the world.

• (1210)

[*English*]

Mr. Roland de Corneille (Eglinton—Lawrence): Mr. Speaker, no Bill that we have considered since the Tories came to power is more important than Bill C-96. I welcome the amendment that we are debating, which calls for this Bill to be read six months hence in order to give the Government an opportunity to reflect upon the Bill.

I believe that this Bill is disastrous. Not only will it have a bad effect on every Canadian because it endangers our health and our education, it will affect our future in every sense.

The Conservative Government in Ottawa did not ask or consult with the provinces, but unilaterally decided to advise the provinces that the federal Government will cut the expected federal transfer payments to the provinces. Those payments which are to be made for health and education will affect everyone in our country.

The Tory Government in Ottawa did this in spite of the protestations of the provinces and despite the appeals from those who work in the field of education and in the field of health. They warned of the disastrous repercussions coming from this Bill.

Over the next five years the Government will slash $6 billion from these promised transfer payments to the provinces, $4 billion of which should have gone to health and $2 billion of which should have gone to post-secondary education. The Conservative Government in Ottawa is making a grave mistake for which all of us will eventually have to pay. Some of us will pay sooner, in health, and some of us will pay later, in education.

The Government's first grave mistake is that it has shamefully broken almost all of its promises.

An Hon. Member: That is not true.

Mr. de Corneille: Second, it is taking from the weak and giving to the strong; taking from the poor and giving to the rich. The third grave mistake of the Conservative Government is that it is short-sighted. It is cutting back on our richest and most precious treasure—our people.

I said that the Tories had broken their promises and one of the Tory Members across the way said that this was not true.

I will illustrate how the Government has betrayed the people of Canada by not keeping its promises in regard to post-secondary education. Prior to the 1984 election the Canadian Association of University Teachers asked the Government what the future would have in store in the field of post-secondary education financing if the Tories were elected to power. The Prime Minister (Mr. Mulroney) supported the official Conservative response before the last election that: "We are committed to sustaining the current federal financial commitment according to the formula set out in the 1977 agreement." In order to ensure that the Tories were not misunderstanding or hedging on that question, the Canadian Association of University Teachers asked a second question to elucidate on the answer to the first question. They asked if the Conservative Party supported the continuation of the Established Programs Financing Act in its present form with regard to post-secondary education and, if not, what they believed should replace the EPF transfers to the provinces for post-secondary education.

The Tories replied that they fully supported the original 1977 funding formula and the legislation providing for that. Prior to the last election, nothing could have been more clear than that promise made by the Conservatives. Those were their words, not in one answer but in two.

• (1220)

We know that the Prime Minister did not keep his promise. He broke it. The proof of that is found in Bill C-96. He did not keep his promise since this Bill changes the 1977 funding formula. It cuts the formula back from what was approximately 7.4 per cent to a figure of 5 per cent. Worse than breaking a promise, the Government has broken its agreement with the provinces. Before the end of the fiscal year, March 31, 1987, the Government has cut back in terms of its agreement. This move is not only a breach of promise but it breaks an agreement which was in existence between the Government of Canada and the provinces.

Obviously, the Tories do not care one whit about the promises they made during the election campaign. As my colleague from Laval-des-Rapides pointed out, the breaking of this agreement with the provinces leaves them in a situation of finding themselves with an unfulfilled promise. A breach of promise and a breach of agreement are totally unacceptable to the morality of this country. Beyond any question, this is inexcusable.

In fact the Tories admit that they have changed the formula. This is a devastating and savage attack on the medical care programs of the provinces. I wish to point out that even when the Liberal Government was carrying out a special short range attack on inflation in its famous and successful 6-and 5-program it never touched the medical side of the transfer payments. Indeed, at that time the Tories vigorously criticized the Liberals for imposing a cap of 6 per cent for the first year and 5 per cent for the next on the post-secondary education section of the transfer payments. As Don Savage, the Executive Director of the Canadian Association of University Teachers, pointed out, the Liberal Government caps were temporary. They were in place for about two years. The Conservative cap of 5 per cent is permanent. This is what Mr. Savage had to say about the matter: