

Government Orders

Mr. Simmons: Mr. Speaker, I did not want to upset my friend from Chilcotin. The truth does hurt. In case somebody did not understand the import of what I said, some months ago he was chairing a meeting and the subject—

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): On a point of order, the hon. member for Carleton—Charlotte.

Mr. Thompson: Mr. Speaker, the member is clearly off the topic. We are debating Bill C-60. He does this quite frequently. We want to hear what he has to say in regard to Bill C-60 and we can debate that point. I think he has transcended the bounds of this debate.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): I think the hon. member knows relevancy and I know that he is coming right to the point. The hon. member for Burin—St. George's.

Mr. Simmons: Mr. Speaker, the gentleman from Chilcotin had asked me a question about whether my assessment on Bill C-60 could be trusted. I think these were his words. I wanted to illustrate my meaning to him by using a parallel example. I gave him an example that he was in the middle of, that on one occasion he chaired a meeting about a subject. Today he spoke on the subject. He has taken two opposite views on the issue. I thought I would put it back to him the saying about people who live in glass houses, Mr. Speaker. If trust is what he wants debated on the floor of the House this afternoon, we can give him some examples about who ought to be trusted on Bill C-60 or on any other subject.

I say to the gentleman from Carleton—Charlotte, these are my views on Bill C-60, my views on trust, my views on why we cannot trust this government on post-secondary education, on the fisheries jurisdiction, on the trade issue or on any other issue. Why does the government want us now to trust it on Bill C-60? I do not trust the government on this issue. I see more health care going down the drain. I see more post-secondary education going down the drain. I see some not well-off students being able to less afford post-secondary education as a result of the latest move by this government.

Mr. Greg Thompson (Carleton—Charlotte): Mr. Speaker, in response to the member for Burin—St. George's, politicians are often accused of being actors, sometimes good actors and others bad. This was an

example of acting at its very best. The trouble is the hon. member got his figures wrong, as he always does. He wants to suggest and to use only the figures that he wants to use. The truth is that most of what he is saying is totally erroneous.

I guess if we want to go beyond calling the member an actor, I might suggest that he is a magician. He is confused in his role as a magician as well because usually a magician makes more with less, but he is taking more and turning it into less.

• (1620)

Since this government was elected there has been more money transferred to his province than in any other time in the history of this country. He knows that for a fact.

I want to step through some of those numbers. The annual rate of growth in major transfers to Newfoundland has been 5.5 per cent since 1984-85. He cannot dispute that because it is happening. This year the direct transfers to his province will exceed \$1.4 billion. Do you know what that accounts for? It accounts for about 44 per cent of Newfoundland's total revenue, coming from the Government of Canada, from other taxpayers, to the Government of Newfoundland.

I do not think the member can argue convincingly on that number at all. I think he is going to have to get into some of those little magic numbers that he himself comes up with. Where he comes up with them I will never know. But again, he is very convincing in his delivery, there is no question about that. We do not question his delivery as a speaker but we do question the numbers he uses. Also, if we are looking at transfers to his province, they amount to about \$2,400 per individual.

When we are talking about transfers at this level, government to government, it really does not measure the other support programs that go into his province, through the UIC act for example. If you measure that in total the figure goes far beyond \$2,400. They tell me that on transfers to individual citizens directly from the Government of Canada, the figure is more in the \$4,500 to \$5,500 range. So that, coupled with transfers from the federal government to the provincial government to allow it to do the types of things it does in the delivery of services, there has been no government in the history of