

role to play in the post-secondary education system. The federal government, in 1985-86, plans to spend \$2.3 billion in cash and another \$2.2 billion in tax transfers under the Extended Programs Financing. I do not need to remind honourable senators that those transfers to the provinces are unconditional in this particular area. I would think that the Parliament of Canada does have some responsibilities in this regard in looking for some accountability on the spending of that money. After all, \$4.5 billion is quite a lot of money, and increases in that amount would be made, I suspect, grudgingly from the public treasury, in light of so many calls on it at this time.

● (1640)

For this reason, somehow, somewhere, somebody, and why not the Standing Senate Committee on National Finance, should take up this issue, as proposed by Mr. Johnson, who prepared a report for the Secretary of State. He indicated that he felt the object of simultaneously meeting the objective of equality of access to universities and the objective of internationally renowned excellence may not be possible. That is an interesting concept, and I think it is one that should be looked at.

Another point that struck me was the issue of research in our post-secondary institutions. There seems to be common agreement that some research is necessary, and that more research is better. How much more, I do not know. Senator Marsden spoke to that issue quite eloquently a little while ago. I have been doing a little research in that respect, and I hope to speak about it at a later time. It is an important question, and one that needs to be looked at.

The federal government supports research at universities through the Medical Research Council, the Social Science and Humanity Research Council, the Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council and through countless special pro-

grams which individual departments operate. Surely, this makes involvement in post-secondary education a federal concern. But still, post-secondary education, and education generally, is quite clearly spelled out in the Constitution as the concern of the provinces, and it is a concern of the provinces, not simply the educational aspect, but there are provinces that have traditions and cultures of their own which are intertwined with the educational system, and they very jealously, and quite properly, protect these areas of interest to these particular provinces. There is a great fear of federal government encroachment in this area.

Some of the provinces can see a single approach, one national strategy, for post-secondary education which gives them cause for concern, so there is a need for funding from the federal government and a need for economy in the provinces. They are not compatible. The danger is that perhaps the federal government does not have the experience or the knowledge to handle these programs or this policy, or the strategy, as well as the provinces with their experience. Certainly the record of federal governments to date in post-secondary educational efforts for our aboriginal people, for whom they have responsibility, does not strike me as a very great success record compared with what some of the provinces have accomplished.

In any event, honourable senators, for these and for a number of other reasons I very strongly support Senator Leblanc's request that the committee look at post-secondary education and the various aspects and concerns attached to it. He already has a reference from the Senate, so a further reference is not necessary at all. I simply wanted to add my voice in endorsement of his request.

The Hon. the Speaker *pro tempore*: If no other honourable senator wishes to speak, this order is considered as have been debated.

The Senate adjourned until Monday, June 17, 1985, at 8 p.m.