

cannot afford such cutbacks. And none of the Ministers responsible for financial affairs have had the courage to rise in the House to explain their position.

Mr. Speaker, I am not sure what kind of administration Hon. Members on the other side of the House are trying to set up, but there is growing evidence that all Conservative Cabinet Ministers have been gagged and ordered by the Prime Minister and the Deputy Prime Minister not to say anything. It is obvious in this case which closely resembles the matter under discussion in the House over the last couple of weeks. When well known businessmen such as those whose names have been reported in today's newspapers confirm before the media that indeed there were meetings between a Minister's wife and their companies, and that the Deputy Prime Minister stands up to say "I do not believe a word of it", we must conclude that the Government is putting up a smokescreen and does not want to come clean with the Canadian people. To top it off, in the case under consideration the Minister of State (Finance) refuses to explain the Government position. As we recall, the Hon. Member for Etobicoke Centre (Mr. Wilson) was in the Opposition in 1982 and, after months and months of negotiations to amend the equalization formula, he stated that it was not co-operative federalism, but predatory federalism. Why is he not in the House, or why can his colleague the junior Minister of Finance not be here to explain this glaring contradiction?

I have been listening to back-benchers expounding their principles. Sure enough, the Conservative Members told us yesterday that we must privatize hospitals, particularly homes for the elderly. Mr. Speaker, the Conservative Member ought to know that when the federal and provincial Governments changed the health care funding formula in 1976-77, the idea was to give more leeway to the provinces. I really do not see how anyone can argue that \$8 billion will be taken away from the provinces because these activities have to be given back to the private sector. I quite agree that the private sector might have a role to play, but does the Hon. Member believe that only those who can afford to pay between \$700 and \$1,000 a month should be entitled to a space in a nursing home, a senior citizens residence or a hospital? If such is the Conservative philosophy and if the Member from Nova Scotia who spoke the other day was expressing the views of this Government, I would like a Minister to confirm that, from now on, the cutbacks of \$8 billion, or \$3 billion for Ontario and \$2 billion for Quebec, mean that the Conservative Government wants the provinces to privatize hospital care. Is this the philosophy of the Conservative Government? Has the Hon. Member from Nova Scotia, whose province will lose hundreds of millions of dollars, consulted his Premier? Did he ask the Members of the Legislative Assembly of Nova Scotia whether they agree with privatization and with a reduction of their costs? Could they indeed reduce hospital costs?

For my part, I am shocked to see such an important financial bill, which goes to the very heart of our social

Federal-Provincial Fiscal Arrangements Act

programs about which the Prime Minister of Canada said during the 1984 electoral campaign:

● (1220)

[English]

"the social programs are a sacred trust not to be tampered with".

[Translation]

Mr. Speaker, "not to be tampered with" . . . The provincial Ministers of Finance will have to shoulder this \$8 billion cut in program funding. Is this consistent with the firm commitment the present Prime Minister had made during the election campaign, at a time when he was the Leader of the Opposition?

There are things which do not make sense. Over the past few days, Mr. Speaker, we have been trying to bring the Government to its sense and have it realize the absurdity of pushing through this \$8 billion bill without any minister daring to come to the House to defend it. No Minister has risen in the House to deal with this Bill, and today, under threat of closure . . . It is not enough for the Government to use the weight of its 211-seat majority, it needs also use closure to stop this debate and make sure the Canadian people do not realize that they are about to be had.

Mr. Speaker, in view of the complete lack of courage demonstrated by the Minister of Finance and the Minister of State (Finance), in view of the fact that they have the gall, in spite of their 211-seat majority, to try and gag the 39-members strong Liberal Opposition—211 against 39—and that this Government is forced to use closure . . . I suggest the Government have gone far beyond the acceptable limits in our democratic system Mr. Speaker, and I move the immediate adjournment of the House to protest the Government's irresponsible attitude.

[English]

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): Is it the pleasure of the House to adopt the motion?

Some Hon. Members: Agreed.

Some Hon. Members: No.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): All those in favour of the motion please say yea.

Some Hon. Members: Yea.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): All those opposed to the motion please say nay.

Some Hon. Members: Nay.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): In my opinion the nays have it.

And more than five Members having risen: