

[Translation]

**Mr. Lewis:** Mr. Speaker, I ask that the remaining questions be allowed to stand.

**Mr. Speaker:** The question as enumerated by the Parliamentary Secretary has been answered. Shall the remaining questions be allowed to stand?

**Some Hon. Members:** Agreed.

## GOVERNMENT ORDERS

[English]

### FEDERAL-PROVINCIAL FISCAL ARRANGEMENTS AND FEDERAL POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION AND HEALTH CONTRIBUTIONS ACT

#### MEASURE TO AMEND

The House resumed from Monday, June 16, consideration of the motion of Mr. Wilson (Etobicoke Centre) that Bill C-96, an Act to amend the Federal-Provincial Fiscal Arrangements and Federal Post-Secondary Education and Health Contributions Act, 1977, be read the third time and passed; and the amendment of Ms. Coppins (p. 14483).

**Mr. Nelson A. Riis (Kamloops—Shuswap):** Mr. Speaker, it is a pleasure to participate today at third reading stage of Bill C-96 which is entitled:

An Act to amend the Federal-Provincial Fiscal Arrangements and Federal Post-Secondary Education and Health Contributions Act, 1977.

People might get the impression from that title that the Government of Canada plans to support post-secondary education and health care beyond the levels at which they are normally supported. Of course, that is quite contrary to the reality of the situation. The Bill should actually be entitled "The Government now makes drastic cuts to post-secondary education in Canada and incredibly drastic cuts to the health care system of Canada". That would be a more realistic name; it would actually describe the reality of Bill C-96.

I want to state very clearly that as far as the New Democratic Party is concerned, we oppose Bill C-96. We have opposed the Bill since the Government first thought of drafting it. We have opposed it at every step of the way. We have opposed it at second reading and in committee. One of the reasons we opposed the Bill in committee was that the legislative committee, in its wisdom, asked 18 different groups to appear before it. Those groups represented the post-secondary educational system across the country, the Canadian health care system, and consumer groups. They were people with considerable expertise in the fields of health care and post-secondary education. The position taken by each of these 18 witnesses was virtually the same, stop the Bill; do not proceed with the Bill to make cuts to post-secondary educational and health funding.

### *Federal-Provincial Fiscal Arrangements Act*

It is in that spirit that members of the New Democratic Party raised the issues at public meetings in their constituencies. We held a number of public meetings and attended public gatherings. For myself, I discussed Bill C-96 both formally and informally with representatives of the faculties of the three universities in British Columbia and with student organizations from the colleges, technical institutes, vocational schools, and universities in British Columbia. I heard representations from the faculties of the two colleges in my constituency, Cariboo College and Okanagan College which has a campus in Salmon Arm. I discussed the matter also with student groups which represented those two colleges.

Beyond that, the matter was raised on a number of occasions with people interested in proceeding to studies at the post-secondary level from secondary schools in British Columbia. I also discussed the matter with their parents. In many cases today parents must find about \$6,000 per year to send a son or daughter from the interior of B.C. to one of its post-secondary institutions. In many cases to find \$6,000 to send a member of one's family, or perhaps a number of members of one's family, to pursue studies at a university, college, technical institute, vocational school, or business school of one kind or another is not an easy task. In some cases it makes it impossible for people to pursue their interest at the post-secondary level.

I want to indicate my concern, being especially interested in the Bill as a Member from British Columbia. British Columbia has experienced the realities of a harsh, extreme conservative Government, the Social Credit Government, for many years. We have seen what that Government has done to the educational system both at the public school level as well as at the post-secondary school level. We have seen what that administration has done to health care in British Columbia. It has been devastating, Mr. Speaker. I have yet to hear an expert, someone who has recognized credentials in health care or post-secondary education that has not condemned what the Government of British Columbia has done in these two areas. I have listened to countless reports. I have read countless articles in professional and laymen's journals on health care and post-secondary education denouncing what the Government in British Columbia did to post-secondary institutions and health care throughout the province.

• (1510)

You will recall in 1977, Mr. Speaker, when the decision was made to change the funding formula for post-secondary education and health care. In 1977 there was funding on a 50-50 basis. For every dollar a province spent in health care or post-secondary education the federal Government essentially matched that dollar. If \$500 million was spent in a certain province in those two areas, the federal Government granted \$500 million to that particular province.

In 1977 the decision was made to change the formula. What we heard was: "all hon. gentleman and ladies, we no longer need to go through all of the bookkeeping of this matching dollar for dollar, and that based on population growth and on