

enormous area of concern. But not one of them has the overall responsibility which the OECD suggested in 1976 should be allocated to a particular Minister. We should have a federal Minister who would have the clout in Cabinet to ensure that attention was being paid to the realization of those national goals, assuming we ever got them.

To my knowledge, the last federal Minister to take a vast interest in this subject, although it was not his portfolio because he was the Secretary of State for External Affairs in the Diefenbaker Government, was the late Sidney Smith. He was chiefly responsible for raising per capita grants from 50 cents to \$1.50 in the days of the per capita grants system.

Occasionally, Mr. Speaker, a Prime Minister has had an interest in this. I would urge that the Right Honourable L. B. Pearson had a strong interest. But I have difficulty finding anyone else, as I look back, who spoke up on these matters consistently and persistently in the federal Government. I guess the Hon. Eric Kierans came perhaps the closest.

Mr. Benjamin: And look what happened to him.

Ms. Jewett: Yes, look what happened to him. That is still one of the really pervasive problems we find since March of 1983 when the federal Government limited transfer increases to six and five. We could have had a major examination of the whole question of funding of post-secondary education in this country but we have had nothing.

In September, 1983 I proposed that if the Government was not going to get some analysis of the problem in place, or while it was getting around to doing so, it could at least establish a joint emergency fund with the provinces to deal with the immediate crisis. The first block of money to go into this fund should have been the money that was not spent when the Government did not raise the grant as high as it should have and was morally obliged to. Then further moneys should have been added, directed only to post-secondary education. They could not have been deflected by provinces to any other purpose. I would add that only provinces which showed a concern in transmitting to their institutions such increases as the federal Government has been giving should participate in such a joint emergency fund.

In September the signals were coming from all over this country that ten years of cutbacks had so seriously eroded our university and college system that we could no longer, in many parts of this country, call it a first-rate system. Yet again nothing was done. I guess I should add to the list the Minister of State for Finance (Mr. MacLaren), another one with a finger in this particular pie. That makes five or six. When he introduced this measure today—he may correct me if I am wrong but I listened very attentively—he did not, as I recall, even talk about post-secondary education. Yet this is what the main part of this Bill is all about. Does he not have any concern at all about soaring tuition fees, highly restricted enrolment, and the fact more and more students are having difficulty getting financial aid? Does he not have any concern that higher education is becoming the preserve of the rich? That is what is happening, Mr. Speaker.

Established Programs Financing

The Minister said he only had a little finger. That is the problem; everyone has just a little finger.

Mr. Benjamin: A little mind.

Ms. Jewett: No one on the other side, including the Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau), seems to have shown any concern. That is surprising in many ways, having been a *universitaire* a good deal of his own life.

Frequently, Mr. Speaker, the federal Government says: "Why do you call on us? We already give a lot in tax points and fiscal transfers; why not get after the provinces?" Indeed, the provinces bear a great deal of responsibility for the erosion of accessibility to our university and college system.

Mr. Benjamin: Especially Tory provinces.

Ms. Jewett: Yes, and Socred.

Mr. Blenkarn: There is not many of another kind.

Ms. Jewett: There is no doubt that British Columbia, and I will come to the others, took \$12 million out of university system financing.

Mr. Benjamin: Who did that?

Ms. Jewett: The Government of British Columbia. Then in 1983-84 it provided no increase in operating grants to the system. It did not even pass on the small federal increase in fiscal transfers for post-secondary education. It is now saying that it will not only not increase system operating grants, it will not only not pass through the small increase from the federal Government, but in 1984-85 it will demand a 6 per cent reduction; that is, \$18 million in system funding for the three universities in British Columbia. British Columbia was the only province to pass through nothing of an increase in 1983-84. Even Newfoundland passed through 2 per cent or 3 per cent of the federal increase, such as it was. My friend, the Hon. Member for Mississauga South (Mr. Blenkarn), commented that most of the provincial governments are Tory and therefore I could not look at any other kind. There is one other I can look at, the Government of Manitoba, which is an NDP Government which not only passed on the full amount, roughly 7 per cent, but an additional 3.4 per cent. Its total increase in 1983-84 was the highest in Canada, 10.4 per cent.

● (1430)

In some ways I do not blame the federal Government. It saw that the provincial governments are not passing on the increases that are granted to them under the Fiscal Arrangements Act. In some ways you cannot blame the federal Government for being unhappy. The Government started the whole thing back in 1977 by going into block funding. There was no accountability built into it to ensure that the provincial governments were spending moneys allocated to post-secondary education on post-secondary education. The federal Liberal Government started all that.