

Mr. Kristiansen: I can only say to that, Mr. Speaker, that the Hon. Member opposite seems to be as confused on this issue as his whole Government was confused in 1977 when it decided it was going to believe in the goodwill and good faith of provincial governments across this country, whether they be Tory or whatever—

Mr. McDermid: Or NDP.

Mr. Kristiansen: —that they would somehow respect the intent of the legislation and that the money would be spent for either medical or post-secondary educational purposes. It shows exactly the same ignorance, if I may say so, and naivety of which, astoundingly enough, the federal Secretary of State (Mr. Joyal) suggested the critics of Bill C-12 were guilty when he spoke to the Faculty Association of the University of British Columbia in Vancouver just last Thursday. He suggested that we in the Opposition who criticize the application of six and five to post-secondary education were the ones who were naive. One way to correct the problem, which he seemed to think existed for us now, is to make clear in this legislation that if this parliament authorizes the transfer of funds to the provinces for post-secondary education, we ought to be able to demand in law that those provinces act in good faith and spend the money for those purposes.

What the Conservative Government in British Columbia has done in the last few months has been an absolute disgrace. It has impacted not only on the students and faculty, but on the life of the community of Nelson, B.C., as well as on the rest of the province. That Government has reneged on its commitment to the people of Canada who provided most of these funds. We have large-scale fee increases of 23 per cent, 25 per cent and up to 30 per cent, being levied on students in post-secondary education in our province. They are denying accessibility not only on the grounds of how much money you have in the bank, but they are also denying equal access to students simply because they do not reside and earn their living in the major metropolitan communities of that province. That is wrong.

The Government across the way, Mr. Speaker, if it refuses to adopt this amendment or something very much like it, is equally responsible. It invites people such as those who now inhabit and misgovern the Government of the Province of British Columbia to do exactly what they are doing, that is, to ignore the principle of equality of access to education. That is wrong. If anyone, they are the ones who were naive. In 1977, other Members of the House moved from unconditional funding to block funding. Members of this Party were not among them, I am glad to say. The other Parties are thus equally culpable of the actions we are now seeing in British Columbia and elsewhere, which this amendment is designed to correct, at least in part.

● (1530)

In my own community there is a mass meeting taking place today at the David Thompson University Centre. The citizens of that community are talking about setting up picket lines.

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Negotiations are going on between representatives of that community and representatives of the federal Secretary of State. Negotiations are still going on between that community and representatives of the provincial Government in Victoria with regard to whether we shall continue to have access to our facility so that if we can find the funds and co-operation to ensure continued programs in the future, that this will be possible. While those negotiations are under way we are being threatened by the provincial Government in Victoria with having agents move in in the middle of the night to steal library facilities and books which belong to that institution. By the law of the Province of British Columbia, which has not yet been repealed, those books and facilities are guaranteed to the people of that city. Citizens of that community are meeting today to talk about setting up picket lines to enforce with their bodies their right under law to equal access to education and their right to defend their private or community property from a government which has acted so rudely and crudely. I am talking about the Government of British Columbia. At least the federal Government has had the courtesy to talk to people and negotiate in some good faith with us about the ongoing chances for the delivery of some educational programs in our community.

While I am being critical in other areas, I would like to congratulate and thank the federal Secretary of State who met with me, the mayor of my home town, consultants for the City of Nelson and representatives of the David Thompson University Action Committee last Thursday. In response to our requests, he agreed at least to fund the cost of the research and development which is now taking place and being paid for by the citizens of the City of Nelson. Other communities in that area had also volunteered funds to assist my home community to bear the costs of investigating and negotiating with other institutions which may agree to locate there. He thus agreed to help with the cost of negotiations and of the delegations to Victoria and Ottawa to pursue the rights of our young people and our community. When the federal Secretary of State realized the economic hardships which our community is going through, he immediately agreed to provide at least a token amount of money to assist with those costs. That action was most welcome.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Herbert): Order, please. I have to remind the Hon. Member that the motion before the House is Motion No. 4. The rule of relevance applies. He should be speaking to Motion No. 4.

Mr. Kristiansen: Mr. Speaker, to make the point of relevance clear, I think it is wrong that we should have to meet in a hit and miss way with the federal Secretary of State or any other Minister in order to have some chance of access to those post-secondary education facilities which should be ours as a matter of right. The federal Parliament of Canada has, over the years, allocated certain significant funds for post-secondary education to the Province of British Columbia, as it has to other provinces. No provincial government in the country has been so callous in the disregard of its duties as has the