

**Mr. Allmand:** Mr. Speaker, there is no doubt that the cut-backs under Bill C-96 will affect students, universities, professors and programs at the universities. Those will be the direct effects of the cuts under this Bill. The Government may see that because that is a direct result, but why can the Government not see that by doing what it proposes, not only does the Government affect and hurt students, the professors, the universities and colleges, but the Government will also affect the entire economy? Employment will be hurt in Canada. If the key to a growing economy in a modern technological age is know-how, then the only way to get that know-how is through higher education.

Look at a country like Switzerland, which has virtually few resources, few mines, little water but yet a very strong economy because of a highly skilled labour force in engineering, in banking, in finance, in chemicals and so on. It is able, through that highly skilled labour force, to have an economy where the rates of unemployment and inflation are both under 5 per cent.

If we do not do something concrete in productivity, we will be very short-sighted in the long run because the U.S., the common market, Japan and the emerging countries will move ahead if we do not keep up with them, especially in the area of skilled professional and trades people. This sort of thing is wrong in every aspect. It is my opinion that not only should we be not cutting back, but there should be a substantial increase in training and education moneys if we are really interested in dealing not only with the deficit, but to bring Canada back to a position of a thriving and productive economy.

**Mr. Hopkins:** Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Hon. Member for Notre-Dame-de-Grâce—Lachine East (Mr. Allmand). The Hon. Member for Humber—Port au Port—St. Barbe (Mr. Tobin) talked about the level playing field that was mentioned on television tonight concerning trade talks. He described it as being a situation that all things being equal, there will be equal opportunity on both sides of the border for trade. Does the Hon. Member for Notre-Dame-de-Grâce—Lachine East see anything of a level playing field under Bill C-96? Here we have a Bill that deals with the 10 provinces and the two Territories. We suppose that with the level playing field everyone across the country will have an equal opportunity.

Does the Member see the Government through Bill C-96 giving all citizens equal opportunity in medicare and equal opportunity in post-secondary education? Does the Member really think that there will come a time as a result of legislation, such as this, that we will need another high level commission such as the Rowell-Sirois commission to look into federal-provincial financial arrangements to get a better deal for the poorer provinces of Canada and equality of education for places like Ontario which pays the biggest bill?

**Mr. Allmand:** Mr. Speaker, it is difficult to know despite the Prime Minister's remarks tonight what he still has in mind

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when he talks about free trade. If he has in mind a comprehensive free trade agreement, that will mean American professionals and trades people will have access to jobs in Canada.

If we go ahead with Bills like Bill C-96 and continue in this direction, Americans will be better trained and better educated than we will. Not only will the Americans be taking over our businesses, but they will be taking over our jobs. Unfortunately, we will have Canadians without training or the professional know-how that Americans will have. We will not have a level playing field. It will be a bumpy playing field for Canadians and a pretty smooth playing field for Americans. The only way Canadians will be able to compete as skilled employees with Americans is by a high powered efficient education system. This Bill will bring us in exactly the opposite direction. It will hurt Canadians competing with Americans for jobs on this so-called playing field.

**Mr. Nunziata:** Mr. Speaker, I would like to congratulate my hon. friend and colleague for his submissions here this evening. I have a question for him. For the life of me I cannot understand the motivation behind Bill C-96. I have tried to understand why the Government is trying to cut back \$8 billion in federal transfer payments to the provincial Governments. The only answer I come up with is that the whole purpose behind Bill C-96 is to reduce the national deficit. It is obvious to me that the Government does not understand the impact of withdrawing \$8 billion in federal transfer payments to the provinces over five years.

● (2150)

Can the Hon. Member speculate as to why the Government is doing something which is almost universally opposed? Speaker after speaker today have condemned the legislation. Individual after individual and group after group that appeared before the committee objected to this legislation. Why is the Government insisting on passing legislation which will have a devastating impact on Canadian society? What, in his view is the motivation?

**Mr. Allmand:** Mr. Speaker, I agree with the Hon. Member that it is hard to understand the rationalization behind the Bill. I can only speculate that when they were sitting around the cabinet table deciding how to cut the deficit, they considered different items. While they were handing out \$500,000 tax exemptions to those with capital gains and bailing out those with large deposits in banks, they picked on education and health care to cut. The only rationalization I can give is that the people who were sitting around the cabinet table do not understand the ordinary man who has to deal with the problems of health care and education, nor do the people who support the Party.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** Order, please.

**Mr. Allmand:** They are obviously the kind of people who can afford to go to Harvard—