

Government's answer now, and I say this to the Hon. Member for Glengarry—Prescott—Russell (Mr. Boudria), if that is the Government's excuse then why did the Tories make the promise in the first place?

The Hon. Members are standing up in this House and saying that they did not know what the situation was before they got into power. Can they not read? Have they been so neglectful of the parliamentary scene in the years leading up to their election that they never bothered reading a budget paper, that they never bothered to find out that there was a deep recession in 1981 and 1982 when the Liberal Government of the day did not let down the little people of this country? The Liberal Government did not let down the middle class of this country, but it kept programs in place to ease them over those very difficult periods. That added greatly to the deficit, but it added to the deficit for a good cause because it was looking after individual Canadians who were in serious trouble at that time.

So the Canadian people are just fed up with Ministers in this Government getting up and talking about how the Hon. Members did not know that the situation was as it was, and that there was such a deficit and so on. That is a lot of malarkey. Anyone who can read will know what the figures have been over the last years. Those were tough years for Canadians in the early eighties. The Liberal Government of the day stood up and did the responsible thing by looking after the average Canadian the best that the federal Government could. We certainly did not rob the provinces of Canada of billions of dollars that would prevent the provinces from delivering their services to people at the provincial level under provincial jurisdiction.

I want to thank my hon. friend for Glengarry—Prescott—Russell for asking those very succinct questions. He has spent some time in the Ontario Legislature and he is well aware of the importance of these. He, like I, have spent some time on municipal councils before coming to the House of Commons as well, so we know how this is going to affect municipal councils and municipal Governments all over Canada. There is no sense in denying it.

In areas of social policy I would say to my hon. friend that the first area of social policy we should be dealing with is educating this Cabinet of the day, that front bench of empty volcanoes over there. We should be educating them as to what social policy is all about, how they must react to Canadians, and how they must stop making movies of the Prime Minister of Canada if they want Canadians to have any confidence in them at all. In fact, the Government has gone so far that its confidence building measures are useless. As I said, the Prime Minister of Canada and the present President of the United States will have all kinds of time to make a movie of each other after 1988.

Federal-Provincial Fiscal Arrangements Act

[*Translation*]

Mr. David Berger (Laurier): Mr. Speaker, I suppose that the time provided for questions and comments is now over. Is it?

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Yes.

Mr. Berger: And I believe we are at the stage for speeches—

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Yes.

Mr. Berger: —not exceeding twenty minutes. Right?

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Right.

Mr. Berger: Good.

Mr. Speaker, perhaps the best way to begin my remarks today would be to relate to you a conversation which I had a few weeks ago with some 40 or 50 young people in Montreal, where I was saying that nothing interests young people more than the future. But when politicians, men and women, talk about the future of a country, Mr. Speaker, it is not their own future which is at stake, but that of young people.

And I was asking these young people: How does one prepare for one's future? What do most parents want their children to do? What have young people done? What do they do to prepare their future?

In my case and in the case of several immigrant families I know, Mr. Speaker, children prepare their future by attending school.

Education is a sort of passport to success. We have heard said many times that Canada's wealth was based on its natural resources. Today, human resources are a country's greatest wealth.

As I was saying to these young people, as long as people continue to fall in love, they will continue to an inexhaustible resource. But love is not enough. It is not everything. We have to develop this resource; otherwise, our future would be grim indeed. Which brought me to the subject of education.

In the world today, Mr. Speaker, success is assured to countries with an educated population. Young Canadians are the future of this country.

● (1330)

[*English*]

Do we have the best system of education in Canada? Are we preparing our youth to take on the international competition that we hear about every day? When I was a teenager, I had the opportunity to spend a year studying abroad. I had a certain pride, as a Canadian, that everything we had in Canada was a bit better than in other countries. Today, I am not so sure.

Let us look at some of the problems that have been posed in the House during the debate on Bill C-96. Once again, the brain drain is becoming a serious problem in Canada.