

Established Programs Financing

there is legitimate cause for concern. Many Members are aware of that and I am sure they would recommend that rather than the Government taking unilateral action, now is the time for it to sit down with the provinces and attempt to work out another agreement, even if it means accountability.

We must maintain the level of service in health care. We must make sure that health care is offered to citizens before they arrive at the hospital—in other words, preventive health care. We must also maintain the quality of our post-secondary institutions so that they respond to the rapidly changing needs of a hi-tech economy. This cannot be accomplished by the present means. We are faced with an enormous deficit, and 25 per cent of revenues already go to service it. It is very difficult to maintain revenues for post-secondary education if we just slip this matter over to provincial Governments.

The Government has to draw the provinces together. It has to show leadership and to control spending. The people concerned about this must come together at the bargaining table to find a solution.

The federal Government maintains that the split between health care and education is one-third to two-thirds, but in actual fact it is one-quarter to three-quarters. This is something that must be worked out.

The Canadian Manufacturers' Association has dealt with the importance of post-secondary education in its 1983 paper entitled "Technological Progress and the Workplace". It states that the new technologies affect all aspects of modern life and that new production equipment has an extraordinary potential to be beneficial, but that this will not be automatic. It points out that it is people who will apply these new methods and fuel the promise of this technology, which will then be realized only if adequate regard is given to how workers are affected. The needs of the workplace are changing drastically and we have to meet this challenge or we will be left so far behind so fast that our capability to compete will be like putting a slide rule up against an IBM home computer, according to that paper.

We can look at the area of agriculture. It has been said that if we do not begin quickly to train our technicians and Ph.D. graduates we will find that by the end of this century we are 400 scientists short, and that is serious when we look at what we will require from agriculture in a competing world. There are solutions. The federal Government surely can assist by putting some of the budgeted money into agricultural research in co-operation with the many universities across this country. Rather than building our own research station, surely we can use the scientists and students at the universities and put them to work with federal funds in the area of agricultural research. This may inspire some of those students to go on to become the experts of the future in agriculture.

• (1530)

This is an essential Bill, Mr. Speaker. I hope the Government will realize that we will not solve the problem by simply transferring the debt from the federal Government to the provincial Governments.

Mr. Cullen: I was interested to hear the Hon. Member say that the accountability does not bother him too much. I suggest he speak to his provincial colleagues because it bothers them a lot. They were the people who advocated the block funding, indicating that they were elected officers as well and they were accountable to the people and, on that basis, did not think that they should be required to have this accountability. I remember the New Democratic Party was very forceful in its arguments at that time, indicating we should not let go of this particular measure of control.

With respect to the cost of education, I believe that building colleges of applied arts and technology is one of the better moves which provincial Governments made. The problem in my own province is that almost overnight a college was built in Timmins, Kirkland Lake, North Bay and in Sudbury, and they were all competing for the same students. I believe if there had been a little more accountability at that stage of the game, perhaps they could have been told to phase it in over a particular period of time in order to get maximum benefit. However, when the provinces increase their own expenditures through their own moves because they feel they are dealing with 50-cent dollars, it is pretty hard to talk them into any kind of rationalization and then come back later and say that education is costing much more than it used to.

Mr. Schellenberger: It is an interesting theory and I cannot speak for the Province of Ontario as to what it did, but I can speak for my own province, as it has expanded the universities and the technical schools. We find today there is insufficient room in the universities and the technical schools in my province to meet the demands of students. In many faculties quotas are in place because there simply is no room for the students who wish now, particularly last year and this year, to go to those faculties and take extra education. That may be in part because of the recession.

I have no strong arguments on the question of accountability. There is no doubt in my mind that both Houses are elected and are responsible to their citizens. When we look at the expenditures which the provinces are making on education and, in particular, health care, I can understand the provinces' reluctance to have to account for them because they can show very easily that they are spending a tremendous amount of their provincial budgets in these two areas.

The Province of Alberta, for example, spends its entire take in personal income taxes just to cover the expenses of health care. All the other Departments in the Province of Alberta receive their budgets from resource revenue. Therefore, the cost to that province is tremendous in just that area alone. That does not even account for the expenses in post-secondary education or education at all. I really do not believe that the province would have very much difficulty accounting for the money which comes from the federal Government for health care and post-secondary education. In fact, I think it finds that it spends that money two or three times over.

Mr. Lee Clark (Brandon-Souris): Mr. Speaker, several people have said today that there is a very serious crisis in the