

*Federal-Provincial Fiscal Arrangements Act*

cuts that will affect all of Quebec, the health services in *La belle province*.

So it is incumbent upon me, even though I am not personally a Quebecer—a Quebec-educated non-Quebecer—to tell Quebec tax-payers that those cutbacks are not the work of foreign forces but by their own, not by a government from Ontario or Western Canada, but by a Government with 56 Quebec Members. At one time they were 57, but one of them has resigned, so this may be somewhat less effective than before. But Quebecers have 56 Members in Government. They have a Quebec caucus which meets every week to discuss Government moves, they have six, seven or eight Cabinet Ministers who supposedly are very powerful—

**An Hon. Member:** Ten!

**Mr. Cassidy:** One of my colleagues opposite informs me they have 10 Members, but those Ministers, Mr. Speaker, do so little to defend the interests of Quebecers that it is almost ridiculous.

For instance, we may very well ask what the Minister of State (Mines) (Mr. Layton) is doing for the people of Montreal, in Quebec, what the Minister of State (Youth) (Mrs. Champagne) is doing in this Cabinet. Actually, nothing! How can you explain the Minister of Transport (Mr. Mazankowski) consistently contradicting the statements made by the Minister of State (Small Businesses) (Mr. Bissonnette) concerning Quebec shipyards? Certainly because Quebec Ministers have so little influence in the Cabinet.

How is it that the Cabinet reshuffle which was supposed to give to a powerful Quebec Minister an important economic portfolio has apparently been postponed indefinitely because the Prime Minister wants to keep the Regional Industrial Expansion portfolio available for the possible return to the Cabinet of the Member for York—Peel (Mr. Stevens) who had to resign on account of an interest-free loan accepted by his wife from a company doing business with her husband's department.

Those are the real problems but the only question which should be asked is why Quebecers with 56 Members have so little influence on that Government and have to suffer that \$500 million loss and such reduced services? Those are the questions which I have raised, Mr. Speaker.

I think it is time we make sure that the Government either keeps its promises or publicly states that any Tory commitment is worthless.

I note that the former Minister of Science and Technology is here, Mr. Speaker and when I was the critic for that portfolio, I asked him some questions. Why is the Government forgetting its promises concerning funds for research in Canada? There was no reply except that things were different when they returned to power.

• (1550)

Perhaps things are different now, but I wonder if the Conservative Party, with about a hundred Members in the Opposition, with all the research facilities at the disposal of an Opposition Party, with all the advice it could seek from the business world, from universities... One of my former professors, Mr. Charles McMillan, from York University, could seek information from Bay Street or Saint-Jacques Street, from major corporation investment analysts... They had the Fraser Institute, the C.D. Howe Institute, and so on. But, with all these resources, how is it that the previous Federal Government could keep its secrets so well that Conservatives had not the least idea how things would be once they had gained power, to what extent the perspectives would be changed when they would be the Government?

When they made these great promises, Mr. Speaker, perhaps the Conservatives were telling lies or tall stories, perhaps they were really hypocritical when they promised to reinstate the 1977 financing formula for established programs, because this is what we are dealing with in Bill C-96.

Mr. Speaker, I imagine and, in fact, I cannot help but find that if Conservative candidates made these false, incredible and unfaithful promises, it was because they felt they needed them to gain power.

In conclusion, Mr. Speaker, I will say the Governments which do not fulfill their promises destroy the confidence of the whole population in the political process. I say to Quebec voters: If you don't trust the Liberals because they told you tall stories and if you cannot trust this Government because it is telling you its own versions of the same tall stories, that is the way the old parties, the Liberals and the Conservatives, treat the voters. They do not have any respect for the people.

And, frankly, Mr. Speaker, I believe Canadians are entitled to have in Government parties in which they can better put their trust. This may be a reason why Quebecers gave us a 30-per-cent support and have ranked us second in their surveys. Because more and more Quebecers have had enough of the old parties, realizing the way they ignore their election promises.

**Ms. Copps:** Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask the Hon. Member for Ottawa Centre (Mr. Cassidy) how it so happens the Liberal Party ranks first, if Quebecers are so tired of the Liberal Party?

**Mr. Cassidy:** Mr. Speaker, of course this is a good question. But I am sticking to facts. Since the last election, the New Democratic Party has gained some 20 per cent in terms of surveys in the Province of Quebec, while Conservatives lost some 22, 23 or 24 per cent. And it is my view that the level of support in the Province of Quebec for the Liberal Party is now almost the same as it was during the last federal election, in 1984. If it went up somewhat, certainly it is because of that transfer of support from the Conservative Party to the New Democratic Party.