

Oral Questions

I agree with the Hon. Member that most Provinces are contributing a lot less to post-secondary education than the federal Government. Discussions are taking place between the Secretary of State and the Ministers of Education concerning a better accounting of the federal contribution in that regard. The discussions have been progressing reasonably well and I hope there will be a satisfactory resolution of this issue.

On the other hand, I have to tell the Hon. Member that the federal Government does not have the authority and is not looking for the authority to dictate to the Provinces how they should spend their own money.

Madam Speaker: I ask the Hon. Minister to be more brief in his answers. I think he is taking a little too much time with them.

Mr. Blaikie: Madam Speaker, basically what the Minister of Finance is saying is that somehow this Liberal Government hopes that two wrongs can make a right—that the Liberal Government, imitating Progressive Conservative provincial Governments, will somehow arrive at a solution—

Madam Speaker: Order. The Hon. Member must ask a question.

STATUS OF ESTABLISHED PROGRAMS

Mr. Bill Blaikie (Winnipeg-Birds Hill): Madam Speaker, does the Government no longer regard these programs as established? The legislation is called the Established Programs Financing. Does it no longer regard these programs as established? Why is it going ahead with a move that will hurt everyone involved in post-secondary education, particularly those Provinces which, regardless of the double talk of the Minister, will receive a decrease in funding compared to what they might otherwise receive, if the Government does not go ahead with the six and five program in this year. Do not kid us about increases.

Hon. Marc Lalonde (Minister of Finance): Madam Speaker, the Hon. Member can be assured that the programs will remain established. Any change that would require legislation would have to be made through a change approved in the House.

I can tell my hon. friend, for instance, that I have had meetings with the authorities heading the Canadian Association of Universities and Colleges of Canada last fall when I discussed this matter with them. They indicated that they would be ready to accept, in the spirit of restraint that we all have to apply in Canada, a limitation on increases to six and five per cent over the next two years.

I think the attitude taken by the Canadian Association of Universities and Colleges is a very responsible one, and I would invite my hon. friend to act as responsibly.

BROADCASTING

GOVERNMENT POLICY ON PROVISION OF SERVICES TO NORTHERN AREAS

Mr. Ray Chénier (Timmins-Chapleau): Madam Speaker, last week the Minister of Communications tabled a broadcasting strategy paper. One of the thrusts of the paper dealt with broadcasting for native people or native organizations in the Far North. Can the Minister tell us what he has in mind for this area?

• (1430)

Hon. Francis Fox (Minister of Communications): Madam Speaker, I thank the Hon. Member for his question.

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Fox: I know that the Hon. Member and other Members, at least on this side of the House, are interested in listening to the answer. I have always indicated a very real interest in broadcasting going to northern residents, particularly broadcasting for native organizations in the North. I am delighted to announce that today the Government is making \$40 million available to various native communications societies across the country for the purpose of native broadcasting.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Fox: Knowing the Hon. Leader of the Opposition's very real interest in broadcasting for northern residents in general, I would like to say that we also made public today the five principles with respect to northern broadcasting. This is along the lines of the extension of services to northern remote communities about which the Hon. Member knows a great deal, and it is very much in line with the announcement made yesterday by the CRTC concerning CANCOM, allowing CANCOM in the future to make available an additional four channels of television to northern residents.

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FINANCE

REQUEST THAT TAX ON UNLEADED GASOLINE BE REDUCED

Mr. Tom McMillan (Hillsborough): Madam Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of Finance. It has both employment and consumer price implications. Yesterday the Minister of the Environment announced in Toronto plans to restrict, and possibly eliminate altogether, the consumption of leaded gasoline. Since such a policy would force Canadian consumers to buy exclusively the much more expensive unleaded gasoline, would the Minister of Finance consider doing two things—first, reducing all federal taxes on unleaded gasoline and, second, instructing Petro-Canada to take the lead in reducing the base cost of unleaded gasoline, which Environment Canada officials say is grossly over-priced relative to the price of leaded gasoline, given the comparative costs of production of the two fuels?