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these programs of equality and social justice in the areas of official languages, women's programs, minority and cultural communities and natives. In fact, we will be having more program funding for the disadvantaged and the doubly disadvantaged. Certainly, we are touching on one of those areas today. Thus I am very pleased to have this opportunity to be before the House today.

Our record is a solid one in both the areas that we are discussing today, our commitment to post-secondary education and literacy. As I will show, we have maintained and enhanced our support to all aspects of higher education and literacy because we understand the importance of Canada's human resources, both to our social and to our economic development.

Our basic commitment was set out in the Throne Speech of October, 1986. It is one from which we have not deviated.

We said then that the Government was committed to supporting with the provinces and the territories a system of post-secondary education based on excellence and equality of opportunity. These twin themes of excellence and equality of opportunity run through the initiatives we have taken to support higher education for the past few years. As well, they are the basis for our continued commitment to co-operation with the provincial Governments and for the funding we provide through federal-provincial transfers.

I might just quickly note that I kept hearing from the Hon. Member for York North (Mr. Bevilacqua) about decreases. I do not know how more money can ever be a decrease. To me, more money is always an increase. We are maintaining our commitment to support post-secondary education. Our transfers for PSE and health will increase by \$1 billion from 1989-90 to 1990-91. Over the next five years the EPF will provide \$25 billion more than over the past five years. That is an increase in any language.

I would now like to give an overview of the federal role in providing financial support to post-secondary education. This has evolved over time and now encompasses four main expenditure areas. They are contributions to the provinces and territories for general assistance to post-secondary education, usually called Established

Programs Financing or EPF; support for research, some by federal Departments, but the bulk via the three research granting councils, the Natural Sciences and Engineering Research Council, the Medical Research Council and the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council; student financial assistance, primarily by means of the Canada Student Loans Program but also through awards provided by a variety of federal Departments and agencies; and other direct federal responsibilities such as the higher education of Armed Forces personnel, of inmates in federal correctional institutions and of Canadian Indians and Inuit.

For 1989-90 it is estimated that the total amount of federal government support in these four areas will be in the neighbourhood of \$7 billion. When one considers that Canada now spends over \$12 billion annually on post-secondary education, the significance of the federal government support becomes readily apparent.

About 75 per cent of the \$7 billion is provided to the provinces and territories by means of tax and cash transfers under the EPF. There was some element of doubt expressed by Members opposite as to where we stood in terms of the world, with respect to how we were competing aggressively and competitively with the world about us and in terms of how we were maximizing the use of our human resources. From what I have been advised, we are second in the world in terms of PSE participation, close behind the United States. We are one of the three highest countries in terms of education spending, very close to Sweden and The Netherlands.

We must, of course, be concerned that we stay in the forefront of developed nations. That is why we are stressing post-secondary education based on excellence and equality of opportunity. Our program of Canada scholarships and centres of excellence, plus our support for granting councils are important contributions to excellence in science, research and higher education.

On the subject of EPF, I would like to stress that the federal transfers to the provinces for post-secondary education and health are not only very large, but are still growing substantially. Following the recent Budget, it is estimated that EPF transfers will continue to grow at a rate of nearly 5 per cent annually.