

**Madam Speaker:** Is there unanimous consent for this motion?

**Some hon. Members:** Agreed.

**Some hon. Members:** No.

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## AGRICULTURE

### FUNDING FOR CANFARM—MOTION UNDER S.O. 43

**Mr. Bill Domm (Peterborough):** Madam Speaker, it is clear to anyone in a rural community in Canada that farmers do not enjoy the benefits enjoyed by many other sectors in the Canadian economy, particularly ailing branch plants of American firms. The same government that in the same week can find \$40 million to bribe a multinational oil company to stay in the tar sands while denying one fortieth of that amount to Canfarm has confused priorities. It cannot make up its mind whether we are going to starve or freeze. I move, seconded by the hon. member for Portage-Marquette (Mr. Mayer):

That the Minister of Agriculture help farmers everywhere and re-introduce the previously promised funding to help Canfarm survive.

**Madam Speaker:** Is there unanimous consent for this motion?

**Some hon. Members:** Agreed.

**Some hon. Members:** No.

● (1415)

## ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

[English]

### FEDERAL-PROVINCIAL RELATIONS

#### ESTABLISHED PROGRAMS FINANCING ARRANGEMENTS— INQUIRY RESPECTING TASK FORCE REPORT

**Right Hon. Joe Clark (Leader of the Opposition):** Madam Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Finance and it has to do with the established programs financing arrangements. The minister will recall the House was informed that the government was considering cutting back the \$1.6 billion it makes available to Canadian community colleges, vocational schools and universities across the country. Since that time there has been the establishment of a task force which will report in late June. Would the Minister of Finance tell the House whether the government has suspended absolutely all internal consideration of cutbacks in its contribution to community colleges, vocational schools and universities across the country until it has had the opportunity to receive and consider the report of the task force?

**Hon. Allan J. MacEachen (Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Finance):** Madam Speaker, it would not be neces-

sary to suspend any such consideration because we have not reached the point where we are considering cutbacks to universities or community colleges.

**Mr. Crosbie:** Read your budget.

**Mr. MacEachen:** I am grateful to the Right Hon. Leader of the Opposition for giving me the opportunity to tell hon. members that we have reached no decision on this matter and, therefore, those who believe that we are determined to make cutbacks in these particular areas are premature in their conclusions. What we have said, which is clear in the budget projections, is that for 1982-1983 and 1983-1984 we expect to secure savings in the field of intergovernmental transfers to the provinces in the amount of \$1.5 billion. The intergovernmental transfers amount to \$17 billion, of which transfers for post-secondary education are a relatively small part. We have not reached any conclusions. We are looking forward to the examination of the parliamentary task force which will assist us in reaching our position before we present it to the provinces.

**Mr. Clark:** Madam Speaker, I have to draw the attention of the minister not only to his own budget, in which he indicated there would be cutbacks, but also to the statement of his colleague, the Minister of National Health and Welfare who, in a CBC television interview on November 8, 1980, talking about cutbacks in the EPF arrangements indicated that medicare and matters related to health would not be cut. She then went on to talk about education and said:

This is a candidate for savings which will be rechannelled differently.

In other words, the minister of health has said the exact opposite of what the Minister of Finance has now told the House of Commons.

**Some hon. Members:** Oh, oh!

**Mr. Clark:** Since his colleague, the Minister of Justice responsible for social development, has already admitted that there was consideration of cutbacks before the social development committee of cabinet which would affect community colleges, vocational schools and universities, what I would like to know, and I repeat my question to the Minister of Finance is this: has the government suspended absolutely all of that consideration of cutbacks of federal moneys which would go to educational institutions, and will it keep that absolutely on hold until it has the opportunity to receive and review the task force report?

**Mr. MacEachen:** Madam Speaker, I have no hesitation in telling the House that we do not intend to make any decisions on this question until we have received and studied the report of the task force which we have established. In the meantime, we intend to proceed with our own studies of this very important subject matter which will be, as the right hon. member knows, a matter for negotiations with the provinces.

At the meetings of ministers of finance in December, preliminary discussions were undertaken among the ministers of finance by way of preparing for these negotiations. When they