

under which health and post-secondary expenditures were shared equally, roughly half and half.

According to the 1977 figures, Mr. Speaker, the federal share of expenditures in these two very important sectors was 48.7 per cent of total outlays. It dipped slightly in 1981-82, but it was still 46.7 per cent. Even in 1985-86, after all the cut-backs imposed by the previous Liberal Government, the share of the central Government was 43 per cent. But what is happening now?

Is the federal share increasing, as the Conservative Government promised during the election campaign to win office in 1984? No, it is the other way around, because instead of restoring the federal share to about 50 per cent the Conservatives have now decided that they will again reduce the federal Government's share of tax points and direct payments to the provinces. So much so that in 1990 the federal Government will pay only 36 per cent of total expenditures for health care and post-secondary education programs. Mr. Speaker, especially the provinces with a weaker tax base will be affected by these cut-backs. I am talking about Quebec, I am talking about the Maritime provinces, and now we must even include some of the western provinces.

For example, in 1990 Quebec will receive less in terms of direct federal Government payments for health and post-secondary education programs than it did in 1986-87. Therefore the Government is cutting back instead of being more generous.

Some Members on the Conservative side—and I might ask, Mr. Speaker, how is it that so few Members of the Conservative Party are taking part in this debate? Are they embarrassed by the policy of their Government? If so, why should they still intend to vote in favour of this Bill?

Mr. Speaker, why won't they consider voting against this Bill or even abstaining, when this legislation will have such a destructive impact on the provinces, including the province of Quebec?

Some Members have observed that it is not a cutback but a reduction in the growth rate of these measures. Mr. Speaker, as we all know, inflation is with us, and if the transfer payments do not keep pace with inflation, the result is a reduction in real terms of the support given by the federal Government to programs that are so important to the people in our provinces. That is in fact what is happening, even if by 1990-91 cumulative transfers will be worth more in nominal terms. I say we should look at their value in real terms, and the value in real terms will go down, and that is what the policy of the Minister of Finance (Mr. Wilson) is about.

These cutbacks are not going to affect the provincial premiers, Mr. Speaker nor Members of provincial legislatures. These cutbacks are going to affect the taxpayers, the ordinary people. They are going to affect the capacity of our provinces to provide training for our young people so they can meet the challenge of an increasingly competitive market in the future.

Federal-Provincial Fiscal Arrangements Act

Our post-secondary institutions are going to be weakened as a result of these cutbacks.

Mr. Speaker, I remember that during the election campaign, I had a few discussions on this subject with the Conservative candidate in my riding, who has disappeared since then. During the campaign he told us: We have one promise and that is to cut the deficit. But when? We asked him how he would reduce the deficit. He told us: You know, there is so much wasteful spending at the federal Government that we can eliminate the deficit without harming anyone.

We know that such is not the case, Mr. Speaker. While the Nielsen report criticized a few Government activities, it found very little wasteful spending and certainly not enough to account for a deficit of \$30 billion a year.

What the Government did was try to eliminate the deficit it had been left by the former Liberal Government by making cut-backs in programs which are very important for Canadian men and women throughout Canada, such as health care programs, hospital insurance and medicare. These cut-backs will affect the men and women in the health care field, not only the doctors who are already well-off, but also the nurses and all other health care professionals. These are people who work very hard throughout the week and at all hours since sickness does not occur only between 9 in the morning and 5 in the afternoon. These are people who devote their life to health care. They will suffer because of a lack of funds. Who will impose these conditions? The federal Government. Who will impose them? The Conservatives. Who will impose them? This Government, after promising change.

Many Canadians voted for this Government because they thought that it was time for real change. But did they vote for changes which would affect people and families in general? Did they vote for cut-backs in the hospitals? Did they vote for a continuation of the trends which now exist in Quebec health services, where there already are major problems? I have here some notes on the way these measures are already affecting health services in Quebec, where hospitals have had to close down their emergency services because of a lack of money, for instance.

That is one result of the cutback brought forth by the provinces even before that. It is a fact that in Quebec, for instance, the funds allocated to health care and post-secondary education in the provincial budget have dropped by about 6 per cent over the past five years. But that trend will worsen with the cuts applied by the federal Government.

And if we consider that the Quebec Government will be losing some \$500 million in 1990-91 because of this single measure, then they will be losing \$1.4 billion over the next five years and because of what? Because of the cutbacks imposed by the Minister of Finance and the Government. I do not care to listen to Conservative Members who set themselves goals in order to defend those cuts. They would like to believe that somehow Quebecers will have no idea of who is imposing these