

Parliament and two Senators, none of whom are appointed directly by this House, or mandated by this House, to accept or expel parliamentary associations, or to establish criteria.

The Parliamentarians for World Order is a parliamentary association composed of 85 Members of Parliament and 20 Senators, and exists in several countries around the world. It is dedicated to development issues, disarmament and other peace issues, and has had a very active role here in Parliament for several years. If there is to be a committee to accept and expel parliamentary associations and to set criteria for them, then that committee must be appointed by this House, and report to this House.

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## EDUCATION

### LEVEL OF FEDERAL FUNDING

**Mr. Howard Crosby (Halifax West):** Madam Speaker, Canadians are justifiably proud of their education system. While the Provinces have jurisdiction over education, the Government of Canada long ago recognized that financial support for education was in the national interest. Federal responsibility for education was not only voluntarily assumed, the formula for contribution was enshrined in a Statute of the Parliament of Canada. Now the Government of Canada is abdicating responsibility for education.

The Minister of Finance has announced cutbacks in financial assistance for post secondary education that will cause havoc for Canadian universities. More important, the cutbacks will cause severe hardships for the thousands of students whose hope for the future is the realization of their educational goals. In most cases neither the students nor their families can assume the financial burden that will result from drastic increases in tuition fees.

Specifically, the Minister of Finance has cut the required assistance from the statutory increase of 11.9 per cent to an arbitrary level of less than 7 per cent to comply with the so-called six and five program. This arbitrary cutback will leave a shortfall of at least \$100 million in the financial assistance required for post-secondary institutions. No wonder 26,000 university teachers and the 450,000 members of the Canadian Federation of Students are upset. The former Secretary of State promised to apply the six and five formula to limit increases in tuition fees. Instead, the Liberal Government's action will escalate tuition fees beyond the reach of many young Canadians.

• (1415)

## Oral Questions

## ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

[English]

### THE ECONOMY

#### FIRST MINISTERS' DISCUSSIONS

**Miss Pat Carney (Vancouver Centre):** Madam Speaker, in the absence of the Prime Minister, of the Deputy Prime Minister and of the Minister of Finance, I will direct my questions to the Acting Prime Minister. Last night the Prime Minister dined with the provincial Premiers to discuss the economic problems faced by Canadians who have experienced their worst winter in 50 years. Canadians increasingly have the feeling that their Governments cannot or will not help them, or cope with their problems. Can the Acting Prime Minister report to the House the results of these discussions, to allay the fear of Canadians that nothing will be done to help them at this time?

**Hon. Jean-Luc Pepin (Minister of Transport):** Yes, Madam Speaker. I received a phone call from the Prime Minister a few moments ago. He told me that the meeting with the Premiers on the economic situation had taken place. I have a list of the subjects that were discussed. He also told me that no agreement had been reached on a meeting on a federal-provincial basis on the economy, but instructions had been given to prepare such a meeting. In the coming weeks, should it be assessed by the Prime Minister that such a meeting would be beneficial, such a meeting would be held.

#### REQUEST FOR SPRING MEETING OF FIRST MINISTERS

**Miss Pat Carney (Vancouver Centre):** Madam Speaker, I will address my supplementary question to the Minister of Finance. The Acting Prime Minister has just told the House that the Government is thinking of holding a meeting with the Premiers. Since the Minister of Finance has not yet set the date for his budget, and since he has emphasized the need to consult with Canadians, is he willing to support a Spring economic summit as the Premiers suggest?

**Hon. Marc Lalonde (Minister of Finance):** Madam Speaker, I first want to join the Hon. Member for Mississauga South in wishing the new finance critic well. I hope we will have a long, lasting, and happy experience together—

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

**Mr. Lalonde:** —and the same kind of relationship too. I remind the Hon. Member that I met with the provincial Ministers of Finance twice already in relation to the budget, once in December and again a couple of weeks ago in Toronto. As she knows, I have had extensive consultations with a number of groups, associations, and economic agents in the country. My counterparts, the Provincial Ministers of Finance,