

I would like to make one last comment to my Conservative friend who questioned me a while ago. Although this debate has gone on for several days, if he figured it out he would probably find that it would average out to about \$1 billion a day that provincial Governments are going to lose through this legislation. It is no wonder the Government does not want us to discuss it.

Mr. Lewis: Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. May I suggest that the Hon. Member started to debate at five minutes to eight.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: I did not get the point of order.

Mr. Rossi: That's not a point of order.

Ms. Copps: We didn't call quorum when you only had three Members in the House so you had better be nice.

Mr. Forrestall: Do your thing, Sheila.

Mr. Hopkins: I started at five to eight and it is now 27 minutes after eight, but other people have spoken in between and asked rather lengthy questions so I am quite in order, contrary to what the Hon. Member said.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: The Chair is willing to give 30 seconds to the Hon. Member to conclude. We will then proceed with debate.

Mr. Hopkins: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I simply want to conclude by saying that I hope my Conservative colleague who questioned me first is not suggesting that a Bill which deals with this amount of money should be pushed through Parliament quickly. That shows a total lack of confidence in Parliament. I do not think that should be the case at all. Members should be allowed to discuss this. When the Hon. Member for Yukon (Mr. Nielsen) was on this side of the House, he always said that money went through the House too fast. He said he still believes that and I am glad because we feel that we should debate issues which deal with large amounts of money in which the futures of every province and the territories of the country are involved. As long as that is the case, we will be on our feet talking about it and trying to bring better things to bear than the Hon. Member who asked the question.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Alfonso Gagliano (Saint-Léonard—Anjou): Mr. Speaker, this evening I would like to take part in the debate on the motion presented by the Hon. Member for Hamilton East (Ms. Copps), asking the Government to postpone passage of the Bill for six months so that the Government can call a conference of First Ministers. At the conference, discussions would be held to find a solution and draft a fiscal agreement between Canada and the provinces. This agreement would have to be the result of a consensus, an agreement everybody can live with, and at the same time should give the Government a chance to show that it believes in what it promised,

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which was consultation and co-operation with the provinces. If Bill C-96 is allowed to proceed, however, the Government will never be able to keep its promises.

Mr. Speaker, perhaps it would be useful to remind Government Members what their promises were with respect to payments to the provinces.

At a meeting of the Quebec Conservative Caucus held in Sherbrooke on July 26, 1984, the Progressive Conservative Party promised the following, and I quote:

"To observe the federal obligation to finance health care in the provinces under the established programs financing system and provide additional funding for the provinces on a parity basis, to establish or expand programs that are recognized, at a national conference of Health Ministers and health care professionals, as being most likely to improve the general health of Canadians and thus limit the cost of the system in the long term."

It was on that same occasion, on July 26, 1984, that the present Prime Minister, with his hand on his heart, promised he would never tamper with social programs. And we all know what happened in the May Budget and how he tampered with our social programs, and of course we all remember all the demonstrations on Parliament Hill, when for the first time in Canadian history, our senior citizens, our neediest senior citizens came here on Parliament Hill to tell this Government that it had reneged on its promises, and we must not forget Mrs. Denis, who said: Goodbye, Charlie Brown, we'll remember you.

It was on that same day, Mr. Speaker, that the present Prime Minister promised to defend the footwear industry and said he would go and see his friends in the United States, to protect our jobs in the Canadian footwear industry. We all know what happened last November: he abolished footwear quotas and the remaining few will soon be abolished as well.

Again that same day, Mr. Speaker, July 26, 1984, the Progressive Conservative Government made a promise during its 1984 election campaign: an increase in research and development expenditures to 2.5 per cent of the Gross National Product, and I quote this promise word for word: "Our commitment respecting research and development is a basic element of our over-all socio-economic development program. We firmly intend to double the research and development budget by increasing it to 2.5 per cent of the Gross National Product." So of course this past weekend we all read in the newspaper about the way it is keeping this promise, precisely by imposing severe cut-backs to small businesses which specialize in research and development.

Well, Mr. Speaker, I should like to speak more directly to Bill C-96 and mention how the provinces have reacted. Ontario Premier David Peterson said, and I quote: "This shortage of revenues for the provinces will lead to fewer services". There will be fewer hospital beds, warns the Ontario Premier who also believes that provincial community colleges and universities will decrease enrolments by 75,000 in 1990.