

But, should we be surprised at this government's abandonment of students with its dismal record of supporting those seeking further education and training? The Tories have slashed \$41 million from the over-all student employment program.

It have proposed a 3 per cent user fee for students receiving Canada student loans.

It will, if it gets its way, institute for the first time almost anywhere in the world, a tax on books and supplies, further pushing up the costs of an education. As it has placed limits on transfer payments to the provinces for post-secondary education, this will result in tuition fee increases.

It is time that this Conservative government recognize that the most important natural resource of this country is its young people. Rather than slashing programs to assist students in their education and training, we should be investing in our future and putting more money into summer job programs.

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THE ENVIRONMENT

Mr. Bill Casey (Cumberland—Colchester): Mr. Speaker, I would like to say how pleased I am with the tabling of The Green Plan by the Minister of the Environment.

My riding of Cumberland—Colchester in Nova Scotia is made up of people from all walks of life who are very concerned about the environment and related issues. They want to work toward maintaining and improving the best area of Canada in which to live.

It is exciting and refreshing for me to receive letters, ranging from elementary school students to seniors and all ages in between expressing this concern for the environment. We are all concerned that Canadians are the highest users of energy in the world, that Canadians are the world's fourth largest producers of carbon dioxide and that the average Canadian produces almost two kilograms of waste per day, more than any other country.

The Green Plan lays out a direction, but also gives Canadians the opportunity to speak their points of view in 35 information sessions scheduled for across Canada. In every issue, be it GST or government cuts or the environment, people want and, in fact, are demanding

the opportunity to be involved. I urge Nova Scotians to attend the session scheduled for Halifax on April 27, less than one month away, and express those views, make their recommendations and be a part of the process.

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PUBLIC SERVICE

Ms. Mary Clancy (Halifax): Mr. Speaker, in December of last year the government forced through back-to-work legislation against certain Public Service workers, including ships' crews and hospital workers.

Part of the package was that there would be a report of the conciliation board within 90 days. The 90 days is now up. The Conciliation Board has asked for an extension.

The ships' crews and the hospital workers in Halifax, as well as in other places across this country, are waiting and they are losing patience. The ships' crews workers on the east coast have been waiting for parody. They have been waiting for a report. They have been waiting for some sign that this government realizes the incredible work they do for the people at sea, for the mariners and for the fishermen.

The ships' crews deserve better from this government and they deserve an answer soon.

ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

[English]

THE ENVIRONMENT

Hon. Herb Gray (Leader of the Opposition): Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Minister of Finance.

Yesterday, after the Minister of the Environment, who still is not with us today, released not an action plan but what he called, "simply a framework for discussion on the environment", the reaction of environmental groups was uniformly negative.

For example, Janine Ferretti of Pollution Probe said: "The Canadian public has a right to ask, 'Where is the beef?'. This is the number one issue and there is absolutely no leadership in this document".

A respected environmental activist, Daniel Green said: "—we need incredible changes to be the cleanest. That will cost money and the fact that Mr. Bouchard