

Would the Minister tell us the results of a study he commissioned by the Bureau of Management Consulting on the feasibility of charging fees to inmates of penitentiaries? Will he now admit that this is not a realistic option, that inmates will not go into debt to take courses, the value of which they cannot possibly appreciate until they have in fact been rehabilitated?

Hon. Bob Kaplan (Solicitor General of Canada): Madam Speaker, as a matter of fact the Bureau of Management Consulting has not completed its work, but it has told me something which I guess would surprise the Hon. Member, that in a survey it did of inmates participating in the program in British Columbia, over 70 per cent said that they would be prepared to borrow a reasonable amount of money to permit those courses to be continued. I do not have the final results of that study, but I will make them public as soon as I do.

I have indicated—and I am glad to have the opportunity to repeat it in this place—that those courses will be continued in the meanwhile. I have instructed the Correctional Service of Canada to continue the university courses as it has in the past until a loan program could be worked out. I have more faith in the willingness of the inmates to participate in the program on the basis I suggested than does the Hon. Member.

Ms. McDonald: We have heard about hope; now we are hearing about faith.

REHABILITATIVE PROGRAMS

Ms. Lynn McDonald (Broadview-Greenwood): Madam Speaker, I wonder whether the Minister would concede that of these same inmates, the majority of whom said would be willing to pay for programs, a majority said that they would not have been willing to pay at the time the course started; that this improvement in motivation only occurs after being in the program; and that in the study there was no canvassing of inmates who had not taken programs and who are, after all, the population we would like to see involved? Would the Minister comment on the whole principle of rehabilitation? We do have hope to offer, there are possibilities, but penitentiary inmates are not the same as university students outside. Would he not agree that we have to get them into programs—

Madam Speaker: Order, please.

Hon. Bob Kaplan (Solicitor General of Canada): Madam Speaker, I am very proud of the rehabilitative programs available in the Correctional Service of Canada. I believe that they bear favourable comparison with any programs in this country, in any provincial institution, or in any State of the United States.

Canadians invest a fortune in the rehabilitation of inmates in the correctional system of the country which is maintained within my Ministry. I do not think they take a second place to

any. The university programs are good ones. We found a way to continue them. I do not see any reason why a person who has been convicted of an offence should be given a program which free Canadians outside institutions have to pay as much as they do in society now to receive. I do not think it is a bit unreasonable to ask inmates to put their credit, as do free students, behind their own university education.

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EMPLOYMENT

YOUTH INTERNSHIP PROGRAM

Mr. Albert Cooper (Peace River): Madam Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of Employment and Immigration. He will know that in the April budget the Youth Internship Program was announced, but here we are several months later and we still do not have any program; in fact we do not have any details. When can we expect some kind of information on this program?

Hon. Lloyd Axworthy (Minister of Employment and Immigration): Madam Speaker, as I have explained several times in the House, the program is scheduled to start in September. The reason for the three-month interval was to put the program administration into place so that its implementation could be brought forward without any hitches or difficulties. Because the program in particular is aimed toward working with the private sector to provide an opportunity to help young people obtain employment and on the job experience, we want to ensure proper preparation. Rather than doing as the Hon. Member would suggest, running it in a hasty way, we are prepared to do it in a careful and cautious way to ensure that the program works.

Mr. Cooper: We seem to be having big announcements with big money, but no action. It is now three months later and nothing has happened.

MAKING OF ANNOUNCEMENTS

Mr. Albert Cooper (Peace River): Madam Speaker, the question remains that if we want to find out what programs will be announced, do we now check the CBC booking sheets?

● (1500)

Hon. Lloyd Axworthy (Minister of Employment and Immigration): Madam Speaker, I would hope that because of the importance that this Government places upon the ability to provide employment programs for all Canadians, our public network, along with others, would pay proper attention to the important programs we are providing as a contribution to job creation in this country.