

Student Summer Employment

In addition to providing summer employment, the government will operate again this year the special Student Employment Centres which were so successful last year. These centres are operated by a staff composed almost entirely of students. More than 100 such centres will be in operation.

I have spoken so far, Mr. Speaker, of summer employment. I should like now to turn to the other portion of the federal government program, that part which assists students in non-employment activities. Some effort should be made by both government and non-governmental organizations to assist those students not wishing to work or not able to work to gain from their summer activities, be these in the form of travel, study, or voluntary occupations. The federal government will again this year encourage and facilitate youth travel and study. It will do so by providing assistance to communities that wish to organize and operate hostels, and by adding a series of roadside service kiosks to provide information and assistance to travelling students.

The government believes that there is a positive and beneficial value in travel by young Canadians. National unity is a product of national understanding and national pride. Never in our history has there been the same opportunity for mobility of young people as now exists. With or without help, young people will be travelling this summer. We should help to make their experience more worthwhile.

[*English.*]

The government believes as well that youth is sincere in its efforts to improve society and that young people are anxious to work and to engage in activities which are intended to make Canada a better place in which to live. The government proposes therefore to encourage young persons to direct their energy, their imagination and their altruism into projects which are beneficial to the entire community. The opportunities for youth program will combine the resources of the government with the resourcefulness of youth. We are saying, in effect, to the youth of Canada that we are impressed by their desire to fight pollution; that we believe they are well motivated in their concern for the disadvantaged; that we have confidence in their value system. We are also saying that we intend to challenge them to see if they have the stamina and self-discipline to follow through on their criticism and advice.

In summary, Mr. Speaker, the government expects a valuable return on the resources it will allocate this summer, and it believes that other governments, private organizations and businesses hold out the same expectation. There is work to be done; there are tasks to be performed; there are experiences to be gained. There is a whole country to be explored. There is a generation desirous of improving the world in which it finds itself. This summer will challenge us all to accomplish these ends.

The federal government proposes to spend some \$57.8 million this summer in support of these activities. This sum has been allocated to nine separate categories of programs involving several departments. Rather than

[Mr. Trudeau.]

burden the House at this time with details of each of these programs, I have requested the responsible ministers to make the information available to the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Stanfield) and to the leaders of the other parties. This has been done.

The total summer program is the product of close consultation with the provinces, and with the private sector. Responsibility for continued co-ordination will rest with the Secretary of State (Mr. Pelletier).

Hon. Robert L. Stanfield (Leader of the Opposition): Mr. Speaker, the first thought that will come to the mind of anyone who examines the programs announced by the various ministers today is: What possible reason could there have been for the delay in announcing these programs? The Department of Manpower and Immigration expects that some 990,000 students will be seeking employment, or 50,000 more than last year. According to the Prime Minister's figures, there will be some 800,000 additional students who will not, for some reason, seek work. This makes a total of approximately 1,800,000 students. It is a reasonable assumption that there would be many more than 990,000 students seeking work this summer if they thought they had any chance of finding employment.

It is asserted in the statement by the minister that this program will assist as many as 500,000 students. I say as forcefully as I can that this is absurd puffery of the worst sort. There are only two programs which are in any sense new. One is called "Opportunities for Youth" and the other involves some 600 scholarships for university athletes. The other programs are simply the same as or extensions of programs in existence in previous years.

• (2:20 p.m.)

The program called "Opportunities for Youth" involves the provision of \$15 million in grants to local or community organizations which between now and the proper time will produce plans and projects acceptable to the Department of the Secretary of State. Imagine producing that kind of suggestion in the middle of March to be applied this summer.

The government is trying to use catch phrases and clichés like "meaningful" to package what is really a non-program. In its Opportunities for Youth program, for example, the government has developed no program at all. Instead, in a last minute panic it has tried to dump the whole responsibility on the municipalities and local agencies. The government evidently feels it can get away with passing the buck if it passes the bucks at the same time. If one assumes that this \$15 million program involves \$500 per student or \$1,000 per student, one can quickly calculate how many jobs are involved. In addition, there are about 2,000 jobs in the Department of National Health and Welfare, some jobs in the Public Service Commission, and 10,000 to 12,000 jobs in the reserve forces under the Department of National Defence. This is the extent of the additional employment program announced by the ministers today. The rest of the program relates to assistance for travel, a certain amount of training and that sort of thing.