

Supply

Look at some of the things that are being said about this. I have here a clipping from *The Globe and Mail* dated June 4, 1991. The headline reads: "Thirsting for employment in the summer job drought. Summer jobs for university students are drying up while tuition fees are rising and students are becoming more serious about finding work related to their fields of study. The situation has made some students bitter, while others are close to panic." The article goes on to say that many of the jobs are part time or casual and the wages are near to the minimum wage.

Students rely on summer employment to pay their tuition, lodgings, food and books, and to live during the year while they are in university.

I have another article, this one from *The Montreal Gazette* of May 21. It is on the youth unemployment situation in Montreal, particularly with respect to students and their attempts to find summer jobs. It talks of one student who is among the 1,700 university graduates in Montreal who this year will find themselves jumping into a job market already made sluggish by a recession and a local unemployment rate which has left as many as 200,000 people seeking work in Montreal.

In the French newspapers, we see in *La Presse*

[Translation]

—May 27 1991: Tough summer for the students. The unemployment rate for those aged between 15 and 24 dramatically increased since September, that is less than a year, from 13.9 per cent last year to 20.9 per cent this year in Montreal. This summer, many students will have to accept small jobs paying the minimum wage.

Mr. Speaker, we could also read the following in an Ottawa newspaper, *Le Droit*, on April 25: Youth unemployment Statistics Canada just announced that youth unemployment in Quebec has reached alarming levels. Last month, the unemployment rate for those aged between 15 and 24 reached almost 21 per cent, that is 7 per cent more than March of last year.

[English]

This situation is alarming and what is the government's response? Two years ago the government cut the summer employment program, the Challenge program, by 35 per cent and this year it was increased by a mere \$3 million, an increase of 2.5 per cent, I believe. With unemployment becoming a larger and larger problem,

that was total nonsense. Total nonsense in face of the problem.

The hon. member just asked a question of my colleague: what would you do? What we would do is put the funding back where it was in 1984, 1985 and 1986 so that community groups and small businesses could employ people to do the jobs that have to be done.

In my own constituency, for example, the Challenge program has been cut for four consecutive years. Last year the funding was \$107,865; this year it is \$89,677, a cut of 20 per cent. Last year we were able to fund 68 jobs, this year only 50. I have already described the unemployment figures for students in Montreal.

What would we do? The groups that have lost those jobs are day care centres for young people. These are programs to help the elderly in hospitals and in senior citizens' homes. These are jobs in hospitals and in rehabilitation centres. If the government had a little more political will and put the money up front, there are all sorts of things that have to be done in this country, especially by social agencies for the poor, the sick, the elderly and for impoverished youth. Those jobs are there waiting to be funded. The government is simply backing off with this ridiculous argument that because we have a deficit we must cut back on all things. It is cutting back on the wrong things. The last thing you cut back on in time of recession is education and helping young people prepare for education.

What has the government done? It has not only cut back on the programs for summer employment. In the last budget it cut back on the training and retraining programs. It cut back on assistance to the provinces for post-secondary education. It cut back and closed the student employment centres and it cut back on research and development. These are the last things that you will ever cut because these are the things that help you increase your national income and productivity. These are the things that create a thriving economy.

• (1350)

If you do not have trained, skilled workers, if you do not have the professional people, the scientists, to do the job in this country, we will become a banana republic. I do not know if the government realizes that. By cutting education and cutting money to students for education, what the government is doing is bringing about a situa-