

Company of Young Canadians Act

attitude that the people of Canada should do what they say, not what the people think.

The minister has spoken today against the idea of having volunteers on the board. Some months ago he made a speech to the Association of Canadian Universities. I am sorry that I have been unable to find a copy or a summary of his speech, which did appear in the newspapers, as I wanted to put it on the record. It was an interesting speech in light of the attitude of the minister today. It was one of the toughest, sternest criticisms of our universities and the way they are administered that I have read in recent years. Although I cannot quote it word for word, I am sure I can fairly summarize what the minister said.

What did the minister say in his lecture—which is what it was—to the Association of Canadian Universities? He lectured the administrators of our universities very sternly because they had not faced up to their responsibilities in the 1960's and 1970's. They had not realized that times had changed. They had not realized that students at university could no longer be treated as children. They had not realized that students at university could no longer be given orders which must be followed. The minister told the administrators of our universities in no uncertain terms that in these days students at university had to be considered as people. They had to be consulted and given some authority. They should be given representation on the board of governors of a university. They should be given representation on the senates of universities, and I suppose I should also include representation on the faculty committees of universities. That was essentially what the minister said.

I am old-fashioned about our universities. I think the whole idea of student power went much too far. The minister was a great deal more radical in his speech to the Association of Canadian Universities than I have ever been. The minister was not responsible for Canadian universities and so he was prepared to be radical and revolutionary and to lecture the administrators of Canadian universities about their sins, about being stodgy and staid and not accepting the responsibilities of the 1970's.

● (5:10 p.m.)

What do we find today when we have an agency which is the responsibility of the minister? He has forgotten all those fine phrases which he uttered before the Association of

Canadian Universities. He said some authority and responsibility should be given to the students at Canadian universities. Now, we have an agency for which the minister is responsible and for which the minister will have to account to the public. He will have to account to Mr. Saulnier who may have some influence on votes in Montreal. That being the case, all the ideals and principles about participatory democracy and the rights of young people to have a say in decisions concerning their own affairs fly out the window. What we get from the minister is the same old view that the volunteers are employees, that they should know their place, that they should be under the control of the director, the administrator, the government, and the minister, and that there is no room for representatives of the volunteers on the council of the Company of Young Canadians.

I say that the views which the minister expressed today are diametrically opposed, in principle as well as in execution, to the views he expressed in his speech to the Association of Canadian Universities. That the minister is not consistent does not surprise me at all because he and this government, so far as I am concerned, have demonstrated over and over again that what they want this Parliament to do and what they want everyone to do is exactly what they say. So I do not expect the minister—who has not listened to my speech, but that does not surprise me either—to pay attention to the speeches made on this side of the House on the amendment moved by the hon. member for Halifax-East Hants (Mr. McCleave) or the amendment moved by my colleague, the hon. member for Fraser Valley West (Mr. Rose). I think that both are good amendments and warrant the support of the House.

Mrs. Grace MacInnis (Vancouver-Kingsway): I wish to say a few words on this bill because I feel a real obligation to try at least once more to see whether we could not get the minister to see what he is doing to our young people who have shown their concern and who have demonstrated their abilities through the Company of Young Canadians. The activities of the company all across the country have not been of equal calibre. Admittedly the execution of some of the projects was poor, but on the other hand, in British Columbia for instance—and here I am speaking about something that I know—the young people have used their initiative and