

*The Address—Mr. Kaplan*

● (1320)

*[English]*

The capping of the educational funds for education of native students is another flagrant contradiction. These are people who are struggling for a better life. The Government says that educational research and development are important, but there is a gap. Does the Hon. Member not believe that more emphasis and commitment should have been placed in the Throne Speech to research and development, to literacy and to financing of colleges and universities?

**Mrs. Browes:** Mr. Speaker, I appreciate the comments of the Hon. Member and thank him for directing the question to me.

First, let me comment on his remarks about employment. Indeed, the unemployment figures have decreased rather dramatically. Youth employment is something on which this Government has really concentrated. When we look at the statistics, we see that over 100,000 young people under age 25 own their own businesses. It is truly remarkable that the young people of Canada have decided that they want to own their own business and get into the free enterprise system to make it work. I am delighted that has happened.

Second, an emphasis has been put on training. In our community college, Scarborough Centennial College, we put a great deal of emphasis on training for real jobs. Let me give a particular example of a training program there. One of the problems facing our country is child care. In order to provide more spaces for child care, the Government financed a training program through Centennial College to provide training to approximately 25 students per class for persons setting up their own child care centres in their homes and instruction on how to start one's own business. They did not see themselves as babysitters, they saw themselves as providing a service through a business in the community. These are training programs that actually provide jobs.

In terms of the Budget, I think it is recognized throughout the House, particularly I hope at that end of the House, how important it is to reduce the deficit. In the past, over 80 per cent of the reduction of the deficit has been by the reduction of expenditures and 20 per cent has been through the increase of taxes. I believe the wise choices and wisdom of our Minister of Finance (Mr.

Wilson), who will bring in his Budget in the next couple of weeks, will be truly remarkable. I am sure the Member will be very pleased with the results.

**Hon. Bob Kaplan (York Centre):** Mr. Speaker, today I want to devote all of my remarks to one sentence in the Throne Speech Debate. I want to begin by reading that sentence:

Finally, as my Government renews its commitment to national unity, it believes the ratification of the Meech Lake Accord is indispensable to the further evolution of the Canadian Constitution.

I found that a rather weak statement compared with the other priorities. There is no commitment to call meetings, no commitment to proceed, no commitment to make any effort. There was simply a statement that the Government believes something.

I did some checking and learned, to my surprise, that neither in the Langevin Block nor in the Bunker in Quebec City is there any plan or program to try to get the Meech Lake Accord constitutionalized. In 1980 and 1981, and in early 1982, emissaries were travelling from Quebec City across the country to meet with provincial Governments, or emissaries from the Langevin Block were travelling across the country trying to achieve the same result. I wondered why there was this appearance of the Government losing heart.

It occurred to me that there is a very good reason for that. It is that whether Meech Lake has been a success in the country or not, whether or not it is constitutionalized, in those two capitals, this city and Quebec City, Meech Lake is already a big winner. It is a big winner whether it lives or dies, and neither Government has any energy to expend in an effort to try and see it in the Constitution, as my Party believes it should be, amended and improved, as the nation is demanding that it be.

Why do I say it is a big winner? It is already a big winner for the Prime Minister (Mr. Mulroney). Either it will go through or it will not. If it does go through, the great conciliator of Canada, who was a successful negotiator in the private sector, will be able to demonstrate that he has the right stuff of Government, that the extraordinary piece of puffery to which he constantly refers about making the country whole again, about bringing Quebec in, is some kind of reality and he will join the big league of constitution makers along with Pierre Trudeau.