

I urge the hon. minister, I plead with him, that he call together his provincial counterparts to see if the 11 of them cannot work out programs which will spur the private sector to doing more than they are at the present time, in an effort to hire the students and thereby reduce the crisis which faces not only the country but some 200,000 individual young Canadians this summer.

**Some hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Gary F. McCauley (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs):** Mr. Speaker, I believe it is time we injected a few facts into this debate as opposed to the rhetoric we have been hearing from the last two speakers. Let us agree that the high unemployment being experienced by Canadian youth is a matter of grave concern.

**Some hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. McCauley:** Young people today make up almost half of all unemployed, with an unemployment rate which is double that of the adult population. If we were to ignore the needs and aspirations of this segment of the labour force, the costs for society would be enormous. If we were to ignore this segment of the labour force—but we are not. The situation is not being ignored, Mr. Speaker.

In 1981-82 the federal government spent over \$700 million to provide employment-related assistance to some two million young Canadians. With the introduction of new training programs and intensified efforts in other programs, the Canada Employment and Immigration Commission's employment assistance to young people in 1982-83 is expected to increase significantly.

However, in our efforts to deal with youth unemployment, a number of factors must be considered. Among these are our current economic conditions, the changing patterns in industry's structure and growth, the number of students looking for part time year-round work to finance their education, and the sheer size of the youth population.

We are all familiar with the phenomenon of the post-war baby boom and its effect on every aspect of our society's economy. Each year since 1975 another wave of this generation has entered the labour force, with the result that each year competition for available jobs has become all the more keen. Compounding this problem is the fact that the majority of young adults entering the labour force lack marketable work experience. Thus, their transition between school and work becomes even more difficult. Many young people leaving school find that their skills do not meet the needs of the labour market. In a tight economic climate these people are among the most vulnerable to changing economic conditions in which the last hired becomes the first fired. This, in turn, leads to unstable employment patterns, which makes subsequent job searches even more difficult.

It is therefore imperative that, in order to facilitate their future entry into the labour market, young people still in school be provided with an opportunity to obtain the kind of experience that will make them more acceptable to employers.

### *Supply*

The summer jobs for students created through the Canada Employment and Immigration Commission have been highly successful in providing young people with the kind of work experience they need to prepare for their eventual entry into the full-time workforce. The Summer Canada Student Employment Program also has had a significant impact on summer youth unemployment each year. In fact, last summer's program was estimated to have lowered the unemployment rate for students returning to school by between 1.6 and 2.4 percentage points, on average, between May and August, 1981.

• (2050)

In recognition of the serious employment situation that the students face this summer, my colleague, the Minister of Employment and Immigration (Mr. Axworthy)—to whom I want to pay tribute tonight for doing a tremendous job in very difficult economic times—announced last summer that funding for student summer employment initiatives in 1982 would be increased by \$20 million, bringing the total funding for this year's program to \$120 million. This money is being used to create career oriented jobs for more than 55,000 students this summer and to place hundreds of thousands more in employment in both the public and private sectors. This is what the Government of Canada is doing, Mr. Speaker. This is what the hon. member for Kingston and the Islands (Miss MacDonald) has referred to as brutalizing the economy for students this summer. If that is brutalizing the economy, then I do not understand what she means.

Summer Canada emphasizes the creation of qualitative, career-oriented jobs that would prepare students for future labour market participation. The program consists of three components. First, in the public service employment component, summer internship for some 3,000 students is being created in federal departments and agencies. These technical or specialist jobs which relate to the students' studies, can last up to three summers, with progressively more challenging work assignments in the second and third years.

The community project stream this year will create about 32,600 jobs for students in projects generated by established community organizations throughout the country. Close to another 6,000 students will find employment in job-creation projects sponsored by federal departments and agencies through Summer Canada's federal project stream.

Included in the federal government's summer employment initiative for students are the Department of National Defence, Cadet and Reserve Training Programs, and the RCMP supernumerary constable program. These programs will create jobs for close to 13,000 more students who are interested in jobs in the military, in law or in law enforcement.

Another important aspect of the government's summer employment initiatives are the Canada summer employment centres for students. There are more than 400 of these centres across Canada which operate in the spring and summer