Established Programs Financing

al Government and its own political commitment to power through polling advice.

I am particularly incensed because I have seen the real contribution Malaspina College in Nanaimo and North Island College in Port Alberni have made to their cities and to Vancouver Island residents, both young and old. They have given an entire new meaning to many young people unable to proceed immediately to vocational schools or universities but with a desire and ability to excel in their chosen field. Cutbacks threaten to jeopardize the programs and the spirit benefiting our residents. Rather than meeting the challenge for increased education and employment training, federal and provincial governments remain complacent with long waiting lists and longer unemployment periods.

The best investment for our future is in our young people, to show them we care for their chances for a life many of us have enjoyed because we lived through good times in the 1960s and 1970s. Youth unemployment is our most critical social issue today and could be the legacy we leave as the most serious evidence of a failing economy and a society's unwillingness to meet the failure.

Malaspina College and educators in China have recently agreed to an exchange of teachers. Eventually we will be seeing students going to mainland China for the continuation of their education. The benefits to our community will be important. By exchanges between our two nations we will broaden our understanding of each other and develop an appreciation for the arts, business and cultures and closer ties with the world's most populous nation.

The agreement was reached as a result of China's concern for a lost generation of Chinese youth whose education and social advancement were stifled. Canada, while offering assistance, is itself failing to recognize the beginning of our own lost generation through high unemployment and the unwillingness of governments, both Conservative and Liberal, to make the connection between lack of economic planning and control and high unemployment and the growing disparity in the incomes and educational opportunities of Canadian families. We do not need an elitist educational system to go with arrogant, uncaring governments. We need a commitment to young people, to their education and to full employment.

Instead, the federal Government presents us with Bill C-12 which is part of the six and five program that was supported by the Conservatives in 1982 and implemented because of the Liberals' reading of the polls showing the fear of the public toward deficits and anger at the job security incomes of the public sector. Both federal and provincial governments were prepared to fight inflation through higher unemployment, as is seen by the 1.5 million Canadians who are unemployed, including over 250,000 in the former "have" Province of British Columbia. Now British Columbia faces growing unemployment, growing deficits and tighter controls on education from the province's refusal to pass on the federal contribution to post-secondary education. In fact, in 1983-84, British Columbia did not increase operating grants to the post-secondary educational system, not even the increase in the

fiscal transfers for post-secondary education provided by the federal Government. In 1984-85 it will demand a 6 per cent reduction or $18 million less for the three universities in British Columbia. The only provincial government in Canada that passed on the entire contribution was the NDP Government of Manitoba, which supplemented it by another 3.4 per cent of its own funding.

● (1130)

Mr. John A. MacDougall (Timiskaming): Mr. Speaker, it gives me great pleasure to take part in the debate today in order to give the House of Commons my comments and observations on this very important Bill, Bill C-12. The riding of Timiskaming is located in northeastern Ontario. Many young people have to leave Timiskaming in order to further their education. We are fortunate to have in our community, in Kirkland Lake and Haileybury, two campuses of the Northern College which offer a very high quality of education and have a very high quality of staff. I must say that our concerns are grave. They are the concerns of young, educated secondary school graduates who have to travel out of my riding to other points in Ontario or other provinces of Canada. They are faced with the costs of accommodation and travel. Now, with Bill C-12, they will be faced with increased costs for registration. It is a mess.

Perhaps the most serious flaw in the Bill is the clause which puts financial transfers to the provinces under the smoke and mirrors plan of the federal Government, the six and five program. For over two years our country has witnessed one of the worst recessions in its history. Today 1.6 million Canadians are out of work, and the most discouraging news remains the fact that our nation's young people are suffering in these hard times.

Further, young people without a post-secondary education are hit even harder. Upwards of 24 per cent unemployment hits this group of people. These facts and figures point to one thing. In tough economic times, the last move the federal Government should be making is toward reducing funding to post-secondary institutions.

During the debate on the Bill, we have heard Hon. Members quote statistics informing the House that students are turned away from universities and colleges every year because of underfunding, lack of space, shortstaffing and lack of research funds and resources.

Limiting funding to the six and five program is a serious blow to our post-secondary institutions which are already crumbling as a result of underfunding. Several months ago during Question Period, in a question to the Minister of Employment and Immigration (Mr. Roberts) on the program of mineral production, I indicated that there were several factors governing why the program was not as successful as it could be. One reason was because the original organizers at Laurentian University in Sudbury could not find qualified and trained people to do the preliminary geological work on the