

*Adjournment Debate*

The case of female students is an even more difficult one. Women have to pay the same fees and the same rent, yet their opportunities for summer jobs are not as good. Of course the money they make after graduation is not as much as that made by male students on average. Any fairness for female students must mean equal pay for work of equal value.

I do not realistically say that we could decrease the fees or increase the loans to female students to make that up, as it would entrench inequities in the system. However, female students are clearly the worst off. Female students who are single parents are the worst off in that group.

We could be doing more for parents who are students. In many cases education is a desperate need so that they will be able to make their way, get out of debt, and be able to use their education, as we want them to, to earn their livelihood.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Vincent Della Noce (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of State (Fitness and Amateur Sport) and Minister of State (Multiculturalism)):** Madam Speaker, the Secretary of State has already indicated that, in the view of the Government, the indebtedness of students is an important matter which deserves serious consideration. I might add that provincial administrations as well are looking into the problem caused by the indebtedness of post-secondary institution graduates.

As a matter of fact, at their last meeting held in Winnipeg in September, the Council of Ministers of Education of Canada decided to set up a federal-provincial advisory committee to review both the Canada Student Loans Program, which they administer, and the student assistance programs sponsored by the provinces themselves. I have no doubt that at their next meeting early next year the provincial Ministers will examine the issue of student indebtedness, among other things.

But a lot of other people are interested in this question. It was raised recently during a meeting of Secretary of State officials, the Canadian Federation of Students, and various other interested parties.

The Hon. Member must be aware that the Canada Student Loans Program has been a resounding success over the years. That is a fact. But problems do crop up, including the cumulative debt load of students, and they can be traced back to several factors. For one thing, in 1983 the Government raised the ceiling on student loans, practically doubling the amounts available. Adjustments were made as well to provincial student assistance programs so that, in some cases, students must borrow more to continue their studies.

It is interesting to note, Madam Speaker, that quite a large majority of students manage to repay their debts after they graduate. You are well aware of course that those who have difficulty repaying their debts, for lack of a job for instance, can apply for coverage under the interest remittal program.

On another point, it goes without saying, Madam Speaker, that the Government will consider any new initiative that may be recommended to it to increase accessibility to post-secondary education, whether through scholarships or grants. However, this will have to be done in a manner consistent with fiscal constraints.

I would finally like to inform the Hon. Member that certain difficulties of an administrative nature have delayed the publication of the annual reports of the Canadian Student Loans Program for 1983-84 and 1984-85.

However, I would like to assure the House that those two reports will be tabled before Christmas.

If in the meantime some Hon. Members would like to have information on those two years of loans, I would suggest that they contact the Student Assistance Directorate in the Secretary of State Department.

**The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Champagne):** A motion to adjourn the House is now deemed to have been adopted. Accordingly, this House stands adjourned until tomorrow at 11 a.m., pursuant to Standing Order 3.(1).

The House adjourned at 6.26 p.m.