

### Government Orders

Thus far from all the colleges and universities across Canada, there have been 92,000 aboriginal graduates. That is quite a huge cadre of professionals who will contribute in some way to their communities.

On Monday the *Edmonton Journal* featured the graduation of native law students. Five or six of them were pictured on the front. I know most of them, but the one that leaped out at me was none other than Mr. Brad Enge from the Northwest Territories. He is a native student and a 20-year veteran of the RCMP who has contributed to his community and his country. He is a proud Canadian who has worked hard for law and order. He is a proud Canadian who has worked for the young people in his community. He is a model for these young people.

That is how it is done. Success is the way in the native communities to bring further successes. These 92,000 graduates thus far, along with the law students who were pictured on the front page of the *Edmonton Journal* are the way to go.

There is more than one way to deal with young offenders, the whole issue of social justice and a number of other justice issues as well. There is rehabilitation but there is also the way of leadership, young people who set an example as those people will do.

Part of the consultations on the concept of Youth Service Canada had me in contact with many youth across Canada. I met with hundreds of groups. We talked about all the bad things which are happening.

I had the occasion to go to the SkyDome stadium in Toronto. There were 50,000 young people accompanied by their teachers. They were celebrating what they called the journey of hope. It was a positive celebration to show that Canada's young people are not just involved in crimes. They are doing many wonderful things.

I have attended many graduations across the country, many of which involved aboriginal youth, but many of which involved ordinary Canadian citizens.

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It is positive and wonderful to see people doing something constructive for which they get no credit. I wanted to celebrate that with my hon. colleagues.

Speaking about the Youth Service Canada I believe that every department and crown corporation will do its part to forge those partnerships which will produce healthier and better contributing young people across Canada.

In the Dene language we have what is called Dene Tulu. It is the path you walk on and the path you walk on is the path of your own choosing. We have integrated that as one stream into the youth services corps because of the young people who have been marginalized or have been left out, who have dropped out of

school and have given up learning and are out of the labour market. Essentially, they become so marginalized they drop out of life. We need to rebuild their confidence. We have to get them back to work and back to learning.

This stream called the Dene Tulu or Tulu would have them contributing. Whether the path you choose is good or bad is really up to you. That is the Dene form of justice. Tulu is one of our four guiding themes for Youth Service Canada to look at directly assisting those young offenders who are in community based rehabilitation programs.

Young offenders were also prominent at some of our consultations across Canada, along with the disabled and the homeless youth. Youth Service Canada is one part of the government's actions to help young people to make the transition from school to the workforce or to reintegrate into society.

We could talk about the many attempts which the government has put forward. We have put forward a youth strategy and a youth internship program. We have been discussing the changes to the Canada student loans program. They will help young people to participate positively in their learning for future jobs they will engage in for nation building. There are exercises in their communities at the community and regional levels.

For that reason part of the youth internship approach is industry driven and involves the sectors of automotive repair, logistics, environment, electrical manufacturing, horticulture and tourism. Aboriginal youth will benefit from the youth internship, acquiring the hands-on knowledge and skills required in today's workforce.

The success of all our young people as they step into the adult world is crucial not only for their own self-esteem but also for the well-being and prosperity of society as a whole. The government stay in school aboriginal campaign is using innovative methods to increase public awareness and spur community action to reverse the appalling trend of having young people drop out of school, to the tune of 95 per cent in some areas as I have indicated.

A lot of discussion that preceded these amendments to the Young Offenders Act focused on violent crime and a need to get tough with young criminals. However let us not lose sight of the fact that less than 20 per cent of the youth crimes are violent acts. Of course they get most of the attention. It is very unfortunate and very negative that that is what usually gets a lot of the ink and the air time.

Let us not lose sight of the fact that less than 20 per cent are violent acts. Most youth crimes are property and alcohol related. Getting tough and throwing these young people behind bars is not necessarily the best answer in these situations. We are not saying that leniency is the answer. We are saying that perhaps there are other ways of forging relationships and partnerships that will help to reconstruct and rebuild communities.