

it is false economy because the investments that we need for the future are simply not being made. We will be paying the cost for a long, long time. As Professor Symons and Jim Page said, "the crisis may come sooner than later."

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Herbert): Are there any further questions or comments?

Mr. Hovdebo: Mr. Speaker, I have one more question on a little different tack. We are paying something like a billion dollars a month in UIC right now. In the Hon. Member's mind, what portion of that could be transferred or should be transferred, maybe this is an unfair question, to this grant to develop the schools needed to be developed for the future?

Mr. McMillan: Mr. Speaker, I do not think one red cent should be transferred from unemployment insurance, from welfare or from the so-called safety net to education at this point. That is not the way you make up the difference, by stealing from Paul to pay Peter—or is it the other way around? We can, however, save the economy, governments, and taxpayers an awful lot of money if we could invest money wisely in the post-secondary education system. We are creating a whole generation of unemployed because we are not making that kind of investment. We need to invest in the skills, in the talent, and in the latent creativity of our young people. If we do, more and more of them will qualify for jobs in the workplace and fewer and fewer of them will be unemployed in future. Therefore, there will be less of a burden on the unemployment insurance funds. That is how we can save money with respect to UIC. We do not save money by robbing that fund now and putting the money into post-secondary institutions instead. We should find money in other areas and invest it in post-secondary education so as to make sure that in the future fewer of our young people are unemployed, and that fewer will be dependent on unemployment insurance, thereby draining the system. It is an entirely different approach. Even though it might be a longer-term one, I think, nevertheless, it would make more sense.

● (1630)

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Herbert): Any further questions or comments? On debate, the Hon. Member for Kootenay West (Mr. Kristiansen).

Mr. Lyle S. Kristiansen (Kootenay West): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to participate in the debate on Bill C-12, an Act to amend the Federal-Provincial Fiscal Arrangements and Established Programs Financing Act, 1977. In commencing my remarks on third reading of the Bill, I would like to begin by saying that this is the worst possible time for any government, particularly a federal government whose members have gone on in the last few weeks about the importance of post-secondary education and how the provinces are doing such a rotten job, to bring forward a Bill for passage which will cut whatever increases are currently provided for the post-secondary educational system across the country. It is the worst of times.

In the Province of British Columbia, in the constituency of Kootenay West and in the City of Nelson, aid to post-second-

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ary education is not an academic subject. On numerous occasions during the consideration of this Bill, and at other times over the last one or two months, I have outlined some of the history of what is happening to post-secondary education in my own area and in my own province, particularly as it relates to the closure of the David Thompson University Centre in Nelson, B.C. In demonstrating that this is not an academic subject to us, I want to illustrate to Hon. Members of the House, particularly to the Government which pretends to care, just what kind of impact these cuts are having on students, teachers, instructors, professors, on jobs, on communities and on people. The cuts are continued to be allowed and, it could be argued, are being further encouraged by the consideration and passage of this legislation.

I would like to begin illustrating these impacts by reading a letter signed by Dennis Bannert, Co-ordinator, Unemployment Action Centre, Nelson, B.C., dated March 27, 1984. This letter was addressed to the Secretary of State (Mr. Joyal), with whom I, the mayor of my city and representatives of the David Thompson University Centre Action Committee in Vancouver just last Thursday. It reads:

Dear Sir:

Re: Impending Closure of David Thompson University Centre

In our capacity as a volunteer organization with a mandate to assist unemployed people in a variety of ways, we are very distressed about the impact the above closure will have on our area. During the past year of operation this centre has had numerous contacts with young people and unemployed people experiencing severe difficulties related to access to higher education. These difficulties are manifest on two levels:

1. The major degree granting universities are located on the coast hence the extra financial burden for interior students is much higher. In many cases the burden is prohibitive, particularly for students of unemployed parents.

2. Financial assistance for students has become excessively restricted. The B.C. Ministry of Human Resources now provides no measurable assistance to students. We also have experienced a number of UIC appeals involving denial of U.I. benefits on grounds of lack of availability for work due to attendance at courses of instruction. With our unemployment rate regionally of 25 per cent plus, it appears to us ludicrous to cite a question of availability since job offers are virtually non-existent.

On March 20, 1984 a young French Canadian was found hanged in his small apartment. He ended his life due primarily to severe depression related to unemployment and lack of opportunities. We know that this young man was desperately trying to get access to English language upgrading through the local manpower office to no avail.

The above case, of course, is an extreme example however it does indicate the degree of desperation in our region. To close a post-secondary, degree-granting facility such as D.T.U.C. at a time when so many young people in the interior of this province are in such need is in our opinion nothing short of a denial of human rights.

Mr. Minister anything you are able to do to assist this community and region in maintaining the historic delivery of post-secondary education at D.T.U.C. would be a very humane and progressive step. We implore you to give very serious consideration to ways and means of assisting this region in its plight.

Yours in Hope,

Dennis Bannert
Co-ordinator
Unemployment Action Centre