

Established Programs Financing

most important. Obviously the Government has made that kind of determination. It has looked at such things as Canada, where you can put in a few hundred million dollars, or de Havilland, or Maislin, or the maintenance of that great white elephant known as Mirabel, and has determined these are the priorities, not the funding of post-secondary education. In an effort to save \$118 million in this fiscal year and \$260 million in 1984-85, the Government is willing to endanger the future of the young people in this country, and the many others presently in the work force who are going to be needing retraining or re-education in one way or another.

However, Mr. Speaker, before going on to elaborate on that point I want to take a look at the current situation in the field of higher education in Canada. The Hon. Member for Mississauga South touched on this, as did the Hon. Member for New Westminster-Coquitlam. It is essential to realize that while funding to post-secondary institutions has declined over 20 per cent in the last ten years, enrolment has continued to escalate. It has shown an annual growth rate of almost 4 per cent. Since the beginning of the recession in 1981, that figure has been driven up even higher as many students have returned to universities and community colleges to try and get additional education.

Why are they back trying to get this additional education? Because out there in the work force there are no jobs for them. The unemployment of today is having a major impact on the universities. Full-time university undergraduate enrolment is up about 5 per cent this year from last year right across the country. Similarly, community colleges and technical schools have had to absorb an increase of over 7 per cent this year nationwide to accommodate the additional number of young people entering these institutions. A recent study done for the Institute for Research on Economic Policy by Professor David Foot shows the total university enrolment in Canada can be expected to rise by 6.6 per cent over the next four years. Professor Foot points out in his study paper that this will, of course, require more, not less, resources in the years ahead. Certainly, Sir, that would be necessary if continued erosion in our educational standards is not to take place. Yet the Government continues to reduce its commitment to post-secondary funding. This despite the fact that on the very same day this Bill was introduced, namely January 25, 1984, the Secretary of State said, as reported in *Hansard* at page 720:

—the Canadian Government has assumed its full responsibility by financing a major share of post-secondary education in Canada.

While the Secretary of State talks about financing a major share, the Minister of State for Finance comes in with a Bill that cuts it back. That is a clear example of the double-speak being used by this Government. I suppose it is appropriate since this is 1984, after all.

Mr. McGrath: It is also the year of the rat.

Miss MacDonald: My colleague, the Hon. Member for St. John's East (Mr. McGrath), has very eloquently interjected that it is also the year of the rat. I know there are a good many

people who consider themselves to be the mice across the country who are being gobbled up by this Government.

While the provinces do have direct control over the educational system, it is essential that the federal Government use its financial resources and influence to guarantee the highest possible level of education. That clearly is not the case today, nor will it be if limitations such as are included in this Bill are allowed to continue. Limitations which will only increase the likelihood of higher tuition fees. For instance, there is the 33 per cent jump in tuition fees predicted in British Columbia or the 25 per cent rise anticipated in Saskatchewan. Those are the inevitable fall-out of Bills like this one. What really seems clear to me from the Minister's speech this morning is that the Government, divorced as it is from the real world, does not seem to be aware of the growing crisis in Canadian post-secondary institutions. It does not seem to be aware of what is happening there.

Let me give a few concrete examples, Mr. Speaker, of just how much these institutions are suffering as a result of reduced financial resources at a time of increasing enrolment. I cite Queen's University as an example I know well, coming from the constituency of Kingston and the Islands, the volume of acquisitions by the library has been but in half over the past decade. Ten years ago 19,000 journals and 50,000 books were purchased for its library every year. These purchases have fallen to 7,000 and 24,000 respectively. In the science laboratories much of the equipment is outdated, but there are no funds to replace that equipment with the expensive models currently in place in the private sector which the young people need for educational purposes. Even simple things such as regular maintenance of university buildings and plant is impossible today. It is estimated that less than one-half of the normal upkeep is being done because funds are simply unavailable.

Most telling, however, is the growth of student-teacher ratios over the past ten years. In Ontario in 1973 that ratio was 14 to one. It presently stands at 20 to one. Unable to hire enough staff to keep pace with growing enrolment, colleges and universities are forced to increase class size and, of course, to reduce that essential side of education. By that I mean direct student-teacher contact and consultation. Viewed from this perspective it becomes clear that students are being buffeted by increased tuition fees and reduced services. The quality of education they are receiving cannot help but decline. This fact has serious ramifications, not just for the student body or the universities but for the entire country. Because of inadequate laboratories and libraries, because of reduced salaries compared to those in the private or the government sector and because of minimum support services such as photocopying and computer time, it is becoming more and more difficult to attract high quality students into graduate programs.

If you were to select three areas where they are finding it difficult to attract these high quality students that we will need in the private and the government sector ten years down the road, just take a look, Mr. Speaker, at the business, computer and engineering faculties. These are the ones suffering the