

on training for young people. By far this is much more than has ever been spent in any particular year in this country on job support for young people—by far, by hundreds of millions of dollars more than has ever been spent. Obviously I do not have to repeat the reference to the experience of the Government of which she was a part that killed, as its first step, those programs of help for the unemployed.

GOVERNMENT POLICY

Hon. Flora MacDonald (Kingston and the Islands): Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Finance goes through a recital, and every time he opens his mouth he shows that the policies of his Government are not working. Otherwise, why would the number of unemployed continue to mount month after month?

The Government can only come up with guides and general statements, and it now says that it needs more time to develop policies to meet the crisis among the young people. Young people are running out of time. Since the Minister's Government has taken three years to come up with what it says is a guide to a youth policy, how does it feel the young people of the country will react when they are told they are the ones who are lazy? They do not take three years to get things done.

[*Translation*]

Hon. Marc Lalonde (Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, I would like to remind the Hon. Member that this Government did not wait to respond to the concerns of young people. If she would only go back to the 70s, for instance, she will recall that the Government created the Company of Young Canadians early in that decade. In fact, it was even during the 60s that we created that company, which the Progressive Conservatives attacked systematically and continuously at the time.

Afterwards, we developed the Katimavik Program. We also developed the Young Canada-World Program. We did this during the 70s long before the Hon. Member's short stay in Government when they tried to kill off these programs. What we did during this period was to allocate year after year more money to help young people through direct job creation and training programs designed especially for them.

As I stated earlier, this year we shall be allocating \$1.1 billion to solve the problems of young people as far as unemployment and training are concerned; this is hundreds of millions of dollars more than any federal Government has ever spent to help young people.

Far from delaying the implementation of policies to help young Canadians, the Government has been at the forefront of youth assistance in all areas, for instance in the federal contribution to post-secondary education, where year after year, the federal Government has contributed well over the increase in funding authorized by provincial Conservative Governments for this very important sector of the Canadian economy.

Oral Questions

● (1440)

EMPLOYMENT

REQUEST THAT GOVERNMENT HELP THE YOUNG UNEMPLOYED

Hon. Roch La Salle (Joliette): Mr. Speaker, my question is also directed to the Minister of Finance. For ten years I have heard the Minister reminding us of the interest his Party has shown in youth. My question is straightforward, and that is what young Canadians want to hear. In Canada, 800,000 young people are still looking for jobs. Could the Minister of Finance inform the House, in all honesty, whether he intends to introduce programs that could be implemented within the next few weeks or is he merely going to remind us that, unfortunately, 800,000 young Canadians are unemployed? I know the Minister of State (Youth) expressed her concern for these thousands of young Canadians. Could the Minister of Finance suggest today some kind of corrective action or special assistance for these young people? Otherwise, I would urge him to stop reminding us about what he has done in the last twenty years.

Hon. Marc Lalonde (Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, I did not have to go back twenty years to inform the House about what we have done. I referred to programs that are in effect at this time. Unfortunately, the Hon. Member does not seem to want to be bothered to find out about these programs. Canada Works, Summer Canada, Career Access, the federal Government's program to provide for a very substantial financial contribution to post-secondary education, the additional \$500 million being spent by the federal Government on direct assistance to on-the-job training for young people—all those programs exist. If the Hon. Member wants a list, I should be glad to send him a copy. He will realize that the Canadian Government has continued to set a very high priority on resolving the youth unemployment problem. It has been one of our highest priorities and will continue to be a major one. It is an extremely difficult problem which will take time to resolve. We are entirely aware of this, but we are working on it instead of indulging in the kind of rhetoric we are hearing from the Progressive Conservatives. Once again, when they were in power for a short nine months, the first initiative taken by their Government, which included the Hon. Member, was to eliminate youth assistance programs.

REQUEST THAT GOVERNMENT PROVIDE DETAILED AND SPEEDY INFORMATION

Hon. Roch La Salle (Joliette): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of State (Youth). For the information of the Minister of Finance, the Minister of State (Youth) has both acknowledged and deplored that it was normal nowadays that young Canadians did not have enough money to eat. She also said last week that it was necessary to correct, as soon as possible, the imbalance between "haves" and "have nots". In