

Government Orders

longer period of time on those increased tuition fees. They are being attacked both ways.

There is always the uncertainty, particularly in these difficult economic times, that when they finish school, the career that they had hoped for may not even be there. I hope that the recession is nearing its end. We begin to see some positive indicators, not enough, but at least some.

I hope the time will come very soon when our young people will again be able to have the hope that after graduation they can be reasonably sure of finding a meaningful job. That is what we want for all of them, but right now we are not making it any better with bills like Bill C-76. We are not making it any better of course with bills like Bill C-105. In the event that they do enter the work force it may not be in the area they are looking for but simply a make-shift kind of employment opportunity.

Then they are thrown on the unemployment insurance line. If it does not meet the new strict criteria the minister of employment has been talking to us about in recent days, those young people will be stuck with a pile of bills that they accumulated while in school; no job, no unemployment insurance. It will be a very discouraging situation for all of them.

It is still very true that the more education that one has the greater the employment opportunities, but exceptions make the rule. It is the same everywhere. If there is one young person with a masters degree who cannot find a job the news of that of course travels far and wide. Everyone knows about that particular situation and the bad news that will circulate will discourage more young people from continuing their education. That is sad.

To make all of this worse, we are going to have an extra six months additional interest. That will cost Canadian students \$35 million annually. That is \$35 million annually. That is from Department of Finance officials who testified before the committee. This is not just a few dollars, if anyone is of that opinion. If members across the way do not understand what that represents for young people entering the work force to collectively

have a bill on their shoulders of an additional invoice of \$35 million, that is sad.

It is sad indeed. It is sad that we are even discussing this kind of proposal. My colleagues, the hon. member for St. Boniface, and the hon. member for Ottawa Centre, have worked very hard, very actively, tirelessly I would add, for the betterment of young people. All I want is hopefully to convince the government to withdraw this piece of legislation.

The best we can do right now is to ask the government to delete at least that portion of the bill. In 1990 the former minister promised a complete overhaul of the student loan program. Some overhaul.

[Translation]

We could easily do without amendments like those presented to us today because the last thing young people need is to have this kind of bill to pay when they leave our post-secondary institutions to find work.

[English]

Let us all be sure of one thing. Who is going to pay for this? It is not my kids in university and it is probably not the children of people who are from other middle to upper middle class backgrounds. It is going to affect in a disproportionate manner those people who come from lesser means and who are trying to improve their situation. They have to borrow money because there are not the resources in their families.

All this is to say that it is my hope that the government will withdraw this bill and, if it does not do that, at the very least it will withdraw the offensive clauses.

Mr. Iain Angus (Thunder Bay—Atikokan): Madam Speaker, I rise today to support the amendments put forward by my colleagues in the Liberal Party. They are amendments which are designed to delete particular clauses in Bill C-76.

• (1030)

I do so for a number of reasons, one of which is the work my colleague, the member for Windsor—St. Clair, has done in terms of post-secondary education and in tracking this particular issue.