

Supply

Timmins—Chapleau stressed that the initiative had a positive impact in his riding, and he was very congratulatory in his remarks to the minister.

Stay-in-school has three main components: public awareness, which is very important; mobilizing the partners interested in the issues; and a set of programs and services. The results obtained so far have been encouraging. We have managed to make people realize the extent of the problem. Many people have been persuaded to take part in the program, and communities have been given effective means and tools to help them become actively involved. This has included, for instance, organizing and funding an awareness campaign for aboriginal youth. Everyone knows that education is important for young people.

In native communities education is even more important. We know that the future of a community depends on its ability to function in society. This aboriginal youth awareness campaign was supported by all major national aboriginal organizations. These organizations realize that dropping out of school is a major waste of our youth resource, and they agreed to join the government in fighting this problem.

In fact, awareness campaigns help prepare the ground for future action. This initiative has helped to finance ways to get people together so they can learn more about the issues and what can be done. A national stay-in-school conference, called Passport 10/10, was held in Edmonton from May 14 to May 16 this year. I think the point was well made, since the title of the conference means we hope that soon in all schools 10 out of 10 will finish high school.

Mr. Speaker, do you know how many people attended this conference? One thousand two hundred people from 300 schools across Canada. Participants included leaders of student movements as well as potential drop-outs, who sat down together to look for ways to deal with the problem.

Student organizations have met the challenge in various ways. In one instance, Cameron Heights High School in Kitchener gave students who may be potential drop-outs a very special task: helping elementary school students who are having trouble in school. As a result, younger students get the additional help they need and the older students gain confidence in their potential, which encourages them to finish high school. I think we

all have to feel we are needed, and school is as good a place as any to have that experience.

Involvement is certainly not limited to interveners from the world of education. Service clubs and community organizations, including the Y, the Rotary Club, Kinsmen and many others have espoused the cause of youth. These partnerships are continuing in the form of programs and services for youth.

I think most members know of the START option which is the most important program being offered today. In 1993-94, the budget will be \$45 million for START option projects across Canada. Through this program, local organizations propose solutions to the problem of students who drop out of school. More than half of these initiatives will come from school boards. The rest will be sponsored by community groups, the private sector and aboriginal organizations. This is an extremely important initiative. It is believed to be what will probably make the difference for a good number of young people, in terms of staying in school and taking charge of their own destiny.

• (1705)

These initiatives are primarily based on partnership. Federal officials have co-operated with provinces, school boards, community groups and organizations, businesses and unions. I was listening earlier to my colleague from Saskatoon and I must say that we all ask for this consultation, this co-operation, because it is the only way to find solutions.

I believe that these expenditures are an investment in the growth of our country. Making young people aware of the importance of staying in school is a concrete example. The government will have to continue to support other initiatives aimed at our youth. As members of Parliament we just finished reviewing the Challenge projects for the summer. I think this is an extremely important program for all young people, as well as one which generates positive reactions in every community.

Personally, I know that each time I review Challenge programs in the riding of Charlesbourg where there are nine municipalities, including one aboriginal village, the important thing is to make sure that, through those projects, young people from every background can find a meaningful job in their milieu. I think that every member in this House is pleased to make this connection between the work place and the young people who want a better