

*Adjournment Debate*

answer given yesterday by the Minister of Agriculture (Mr. Wise) to the question raised by the Hon. Member in this House:

However, let me indicate to the Hon. Member that it has been the position of this Party since 1976, is the position of this Party today, and will remain its position, that the producers themselves will determine what system of marketing best suits their own needs.

I think the position of the Minister of Agriculture on that matter is direct, clear, and unequivocal. Clearly, Mr. Speaker, when reference is made to putting in place a system as imposing as the one now being proposed, it involves discussions and negotiations, and of course when the matter comes before Cabinet, the latter must consider some of the recommendations and look at the situation as it exists in that industry.

This is why I am telling all incubated egg producers in Quebec and Canada—and I referred to Quebec because my colleague for Lévis raised the issue, knowing full well that the Vice President of the Canadian Incubated Egg Association comes from his constituency—what I would like to emphasize to the Hon. Member is that the matter is proceeding. And the matter is proceeding because it has come before Cabinet, and since a Cabinet decision is to be taken in the coming days or weeks, it is my view that the Hon. Member for Lévis can tell his constituents that the matter is proceeding and going forward and that, as stated by the Minister of Agriculture, we will provide the majority of egg producers with the marketing boards, the systems of marketing they will want to have established.

● (1805)

[English]

EDUCATION—POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION—STATEMENT  
ATTRIBUTED TO BRITISH COLUMBIA MINISTER (B) FUNDING OF  
STUDENT LOAN PROGRAM

**Mr. Roland de Corneille (Eglinton—Lawrence):** Mr. Speaker, on Friday last, October 10, I asked the Prime Minister (Mr. Mulroney) what the Government is going to do about the appalling situation many young people are facing in getting post-secondary education. I called to his attention the fact that the Minister of Education for British Columbia had the audacity to advise young people that they should “re-examine their priorities and consider putting off their post-secondary education if they are unable to afford it”.

I asked the Prime Minister what he will do about this tragic situation. Specifically, I asked if he would end the freeze on the level of student loans which, because of inflation, jeopardizes the future of students who do not come from wealthy families. The Prime Minister did not answer that question. In fact, I suggest he did not give the reply that it deserves. What he did volunteer was that his Government is committed to investing in the youth of our country, evidenced, he said, by the increase of some \$25 billion directed to those areas over the next five years.

He knows, and I believe every Member of this House knows, that the \$25 billion of which he speaks refers to federal

transfer payments to the provinces, and will over five years only barely equalize inflation at 5 per cent, which is not a real increase at all. In fact, it amounts to a cut-back on the promises which the Prime Minister made to the people of Canada as to what the formula would be for the actual increases which are needed to maintain our educational system. All in all, he knows that in other areas of support for post-secondary education his Government is financially cutting back and strangling our colleges and universities, more particularly our students and faculty members.

● (1810)

One must ask why the Government has twice changed those individuals responsible for post-secondary education over the past two years. We now have our third Secretary of State (Mr. Crombie) and our third Deputy Minister in two years. Is it because they were all incompetent? Was it because those Ministers and Deputy Ministers were embarrassed by the Government's betrayal of our youth and our country's future and, in the face of this grave crisis, were humiliated by their impotence and had to be replaced?

The crisis in Canada grows daily more acute for our universities and colleges. University presidents in British Columbia resigned last year in sorrow and in protest. They knew they could not deliver, and they did not want to deceive anyone. Students have held rallies across the country. The Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of Canada dared to comment, so grave is this crisis, and called upon the Governments of Canada to do something about it. Just today, universities and colleges in Toronto were closed down in protest by administrators, faculty members, and students alike.

Our national task force on post-secondary education, appointed by the Leader of the Opposition (Mr. Turner), is going across Canada for the next three weeks to pinpoint immediate steps the federal Government could take to rectify the grave crisis in the field of post-secondary education.

Does the Government have anything creative to offer to the more than one million students and teachers in our colleges and universities other than cuts to the transfer payments formula, 40 per cent cuts in community colleges seats for training, a freeze on the level of student loans, savaging the budget of the Minister of State for Youth (Mr. Charest) to a point where it is now nothing more than a ceremonial office, and proposing to call yet another conference to stall off federal action? I suggest that this reply by the Government of yet another conference, of calling people together, is not action in the face of a grave crisis which has been ongoing for two years.

I hope that tonight the Parliamentary Secretary will give a reply which indicates some kind of action. What does this Government, devoid of creativity or initiative, have to offer? It cannot act or in this case even react in time to save our post-secondary educational infrastructure.