

The government intends to reduce by nearly \$52 million the assistance it had promised to provide to create summer jobs for students.

My question is for the minister responsible for youth. With a recession that seems imminent, how can the minister justify this kind of drastic cut?

[English]

**Hon. Barbara McDougall (Minister of Employment and Immigration):** Mr. Speaker, as the hon. member well knows, there has been no announcement as yet on what the program will be in the summer. I will be making an announcement on that fairly shortly, and I would suggest that he wait to see what it contains.

**Mr. Guy H. Arseneault (Restigouche—Chaleur):** Mr. Speaker, I see that the minister is not denying those cuts at all. In fact she is prolonging the agony and sowing mistruths out there. As far as I am concerned, when we look at the policy of this government it is intentionally leaking information.

How can the minister stand in her place and claim that her programs are helping students, while on the other hand her government is slashing \$7 billion on transfer payments to post-secondary education, is imposing a 3 per cent administration fee on student loan applications and wants to apply a GST on books and all learning materials?

**Hon. Barbara McDougall (Minister of Employment and Immigration):** Mr. Speaker, I would remind the hon. member that the youth unemployment has fallen by 6.6 per cent since this government was in office, so we must be doing something right.

**Some hon. members:** Hear, hear!

**Mrs. McDougall:** In terms of the Challenge program and the other things for which I have assumed responsibility, the hon. member will just have to wait for the policy to see what it is going to entail.

I would remind him of the very fine work that this government has done with regard to the pilot project with students staying in school. It is a very important part of the thrust of what we must do for our young people.

### Oral Questions

#### PRESENCE IN THE GALLERY

**Mr. Speaker:** I wish to draw to the attention of hon. members the presence in the gallery of Mr. Richard Nerysoo, Speaker of the Northwest Territories Legislative Assembly.

**Some hon. members:** Hear, hear!

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• (1450)

#### AGRICULTURE

**Mr. Stan J. Hovdebo (Saskatoon—Humboldt):** Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Agriculture. I do not know why democracy comes with such a high price tag for some people.

The minister has established seven action groups to discuss and establish agricultural policy for the future. He is to be commended for inviting the farm groups to be part of this discussion.

However, although the farm groups have been invited, they have been invited to participate only if they pay their own way. These costs could range from \$5,000 up to \$30,000, depending on what the groups are going to discuss. Did the minister make the cost so high to eliminate some of the farm groups? How can he justify this cost of devising policy?

**Hon. Don Mazankowski (Deputy Prime Minister, President of the Privy Council and Minister of Agriculture):** Mr. Speaker, of course we are interested in the views of all farmers and farm organizations. Generally, the farmers' views are heard through the auspices of their respective organizations. They have been involved in the process up until now. They have been involved in the national conference that took place. They will be involved in the various task forces and action groups that we have established.

We have no intention of eliminating anyone. I would suspect that there will be the opportunity for these groups to meet in the various regions of the country. We will do everything that we can to facilitate their being involved at the lowest possible cost to them.

**Mr. Stan J. Hovdebo (Saskatoon—Humboldt):** Mr. Speaker, the Canadian Federation of Agriculture, the National Farmers Union, and other groups of that calibre feel that they will not be able to take part and be