

That would be a fair representation for the hon. member to make, but did the hon. member make it? No, he just talked about drastic cuts to education. I should point out that when we are talking about the drop-out rate that that is of concern to all Canadians. I notice in some of the comments and in recent articles in the newspaper that in fact the drop-out rate is down considerably from where it has been.

I am happy to report that the drop-out rate today is significantly less than what it was in 1984 under the previous Canadian government. That is not necessarily to the credit of this government. It may be to the credit of the individual students who have learned, whether through the experiences of their parents or their friends or just because the education system is getting better, that they have to stay in school longer.

• (1610)

Why did they learn that? In many parts of Canada there are single industry towns heavily dependent upon the resources of the area that the town is located in or a single industry, such as a large steel plant, that may be experiencing difficulties. The students are discovering with regard to the hard manual labour that may have always guaranteed them a job in the past—being able to work in a mine, steel plant, or the uranium mines of Saskatchewan 20, 30 or 40 years ago guaranteed people a job for life—that those guarantees are no longer there. Therefore they have made the decision to stay in school, and that is positive for them.

What have we done with regard to that? We have tried to help that process along. We believe that students must have the skills that Canada needs.

There was a comment raised earlier about some 300,000 jobs going unfilled in this country because of a lack of properly skilled people to fill the jobs. That was a very appropriate comment. Those jobs could all be filled by young people.

How do we encourage those young people to get involved? The Government of Canada, this government on this side of the House, established a Canada scholarship program. The members opposite have not talked about that but in the four years that it has been running we have put in some \$155 million to encourage young Canadians to take specific courses of study at universities dealing with engineering and the sciences. Why? We have done so because we know that there are skilled jobs

out there that can be filled by students who take those engineering courses.

More important, we also know that the jobs of the future for young people will be developed by those graduating engineers and engineering technologists who are out working in industry. Instead of having to buy the technology in foreign locations if we develop the work force that can produce that technology then we not only help Canadian manufacturing but we give Canada some expertise and some technology to sell.

That was a program specifically designed for young people. I am happy to report that after four years we are now getting graduates out of the program. More important, we have improved the program. Before it was only available for university studies but now if one wants to take an engineering technologist course in a community college the program has been enlarged to include that, and I believe 750 students a year will be funded. We have helped the universities by establishing centres of excellence programs. These are all funding programs for universities and community colleges and were not there before. I believe that program had some \$30 million worth of expenditures.

There is the Quality Management Institute. Very close to my riding we have been working with a community college to establish an institute dealing with quality management techniques and quality management systems. That is a very important step.

Members opposite have talked about the fact that the Government of Canada does not spend enough money dealing with training and they have cited a couple of examples. What surprised me was that they really did not talk too much about the labour force development boards that we have been working on establishing across Canada or the prosperity initiative that the government worked so hard to bring forth.

First, with regard to the labour force development board, we on behalf of the taxpayers of Canada, it is their money, have put in some \$1.8 billion in funding, which is about four times what it was four years ago. That funding is designed to work with local industry and local labour force boards to take those people who do not have the skill, who have been laid off and who need skills upgrading, and invariably the examples they use are young people. We have put in place a system through these labour force development boards to encourage that to happen.

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