

awards, it would receive a very excellent rating because it is very rhetorical. Her speech contained some very lovely, high-flown phrases which mean absolutely nothing. The Minister says she will use the International Year of Youth in order to try to bring about a better understanding of the problems of youth internationally. However, can the Minister tell me what her role was when all the consultation over there was going on to eliminate what looks to me like a very interesting program called "The Young Workers' Exchange Program"? This was to allow international exchanges for young people.

If there is one thing we need in this country, and in this world, it is better understanding among peoples. One of the places we should start is with young people. I do not want a Pontius Pilate washing of the hands answer that the Minister is going to be a spokesperson. I want to know what voice the Minister had in the consultation. Did she demand from her colleagues that they ought not to eliminate what appears to be a pretty creative kind of program?

Second, all of these studies are now showing, Mr. Speaker, that there is a great correlation between unemployment and juvenile offences. This can all be related back to the fact that young people are not receiving the kind of dignity of being employed in jobs for which they feel they are gifted or in jobs they would like to do. How can the Minister responsible for youth sit there, Mr. Speaker, and wash her hands, saying she will only be a spokesperson? Can this Minister say what she is going to do within her Cabinet to get some of these programs, like the \$85 million for the Summer Canada Program, into place before there are any more changes?

Mrs. Champagne: Mr. Speaker, I have a feeling that I am talking to deaf people.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mrs. Champagne: I will try changing languages and perhaps that will help. As far as the exchange program is concerned, yes, we discussed it in Cabinet and found that some cuts had to be made, and part of that program was cut. He may ask for some more details of the Secretary of State (Mr. McLean) under whom this program comes.

● (1630)

Mr. Rossi: You should know about it.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): Order.

Mrs. Champagne: As far as employment is concerned, I think again the Minister for Employment and Immigration (Miss MacDonald) answered the Hon. Member. I said in my speech, and I repeat, that my main responsibility right now is with the International Youth Year, and again in doing what I have done, maybe not always all that I wanted with all my heart to do, I had to agree, as did every single Minister, to some cuts somewhere because of the financial state in which we were left. Every sector had to be cut, mine included.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

The Address—Mrs. Champagne

Mr. de Jong: Mr. Speaker, I also wish to congratulate the Minister on her very important appointment. The youth of this country are surely our most important asset and resource. I think every Member of this House agrees that there are some very serious problems facing young people today.

I must say that poor Pablo Picasso must be turning in his grave hearing himself quoted by a Conservative Member. But poor Mr. Picasso is gone and will not be able to rise and object. I am interested in the statement of the Minister in which she described herself as the spokesperson for youth in the Government. I am interested in what her position is on some of the issues of concern to young people, particularly funding for higher education.

As the Minister knows, there has been ongoing conflict between federal and provincial levels of government on how transfer payments for post-secondary education have been used for other purposes, such as building highways, by the provinces. In the last session, the Opposition Conservative Party moved a motion requesting the federal government to monitor how the provinces spent the money allocated for this purpose. Does the Minister believe the provinces should be held accountable for the money they receive from the federal Government for post-secondary education? Will she express these views vigorously in Cabinet?

Mrs. Champagne: Mr. Speaker, I think the Prime Minister (Mr. Mulroney) has made it very clear that all those subjects will be touched on during the meetings with the premiers of the provinces.

[Translation]

Certainly these are some of the subjects to be discussed at the meetings which we have scheduled for next week in Quebec and other provinces. I suggest that, together with the provinces and following consultations, the Secretary of State will be able to reply more conclusively.

[English]

Mr. de Jong: You are the spokesperson, what is your position?

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): The Hon. Member for Winnipeg-Birds Hill (Mr. Blaikie) for a short, succinct question, please.

Mr. Blaikie: Mr. Speaker, with a spokesperson like the Minister young people do not need enemies, because she has failed time and time again in Cabinet to defend those things which are worth defending. Where was the Minister when the Government decided to freeze the Canada Student Loan Plan at present levels? Given the situation in which students find themselves, where was she then? Does she sit outside the door during Cabinet meetings or does she say nothing when she is there?

[Translation]

Mrs. Champagne: The Hon. Member is well aware that this program has not been cut.