

Supply

The government has responded with cuts and by alienating a very important group of individuals in this society, namely our youth, who are already faced with higher tuition fees, an increasing debt load, spiralling education costs, and now no jobs this summer. What is important is to have not just a job, but a job that at least can cover the costs of tuition fees. It is not enough to have just a job that the government side can use as a statistic. A young Canadian must have a job that covers food, rent, and transportation to make it possible to have an opportunity for post-secondary education.

The question many young people have been asking themselves is: Does this government really care about young people? I think what really describes the type of interest shown by this government toward young people is in the statement made by the junior finance minister last Tuesday in response to the question from my leader on a call for action on youth unemployment. He stated that if young people would look hard enough they would find jobs. The minister is telling the close to 20 per cent of young people in Newfoundland that they cannot find work because they are not looking hard enough.

He is telling the 16.3 per cent in Prince Edward Island that they cannot find work because they are not looking hard enough. I am telling you that those young people are looking for work and they simply cannot find it because it is not there.

It is not there for two reasons. It is not there because this government's economic mismanagement has not created jobs in the private sector, nor has this government aided students during this summer of discontent. As a matter of fact, it continues to cut and block the major artery to Canada's future, our young people.

This is unbelievable, but I can tell you it is not surprising because this government has a track record on alienating Canada's youth. It has continued a direct attack on students. Look at the statistics on transfer payments to the provinces. In 1986 the government passed Bill C-96 which reduced the growth rate of transfer payments to the provinces by 2 per cent. The portion of financing for post-secondary education that was to be cut amounted to \$1.6 billion. This is the type of help that this government has been giving students in

Canada. There was a further cut of 1 per cent in 1990-1991.

This comes at a time when there exists a new global reality. The relative economic strength of a nation is often measured by the way the young people are trained and educated. We live in a fast moving world where there are many challenges. There are technological advancements. There is more information every day, every minute, from fax machines. It becomes important to train these people if we want to be able to compete. It is about time that this government realizes that it is not going to happen by chance. You must plan and you must plan correctly. You do not plan the future of a nation by continuous cuts to the very fabric that represents its future.

I am sure the minister will hide behind the WALL program and the stay in school program, but let it be known for the record that these might be new programs but certainly no new funding was allocated to these programs. It has taken away from post-secondary students, given to high school students, and pitted two needy groups of our society against each other. This is the type of politics we see day in and day out from the government opposite.

Canadians, our young people, are tired of being misled and tired of the type of approach this government has taken. I join the Liberal Party of Canada in bringing forth the points I have mentioned and those points so eloquently stated by the hon. member for Welland—St. Catharines—Thorold. We want to make sure that this government will find within itself the intelligence, the caring and compassion necessary to bring about the type of employment situation for young Canadians so that once again they can be proud citizens of this nation and take on and get ready for the challenges of the 21st century.

• (1240)

[Translation]

Mrs. Nicole Roy-Arcelin (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Communications): Mr. Speaker, the hon. member is demanding that the federal government deal with the high rate of unemployment amongst Canadian youth. I would like to mention to him five programs within the Canadian Jobs Strategy which are designed to