

*Government Orders*

I see my hon. colleague across the way from Calgary and the president of the University of Calgary, Murray Fraser, was my dean at Dalhousie Law School.

The University of Victoria Law School was founded by Dalhousie graduates. The University of British Columbia was founded by academicians from Nova Scotia.

• (1220)

We have our graduates in schools and institutions and hospitals and legislatures right across this country. So we have been providing a valued service to the people of Canada for a long time. We are very proud of this tradition. We are proud of our graduates. We are proud of our students.

But our students in Nova Scotia are taking a beating that they just cannot sustain much longer. Dalhousie University had to increase tuition fees this year by 10 per cent. A lot of us in this House have children who are in university or are getting to the age to be university students.

Ten per cent is a large amount of money, particularly in the midst of the worst recession that this country has seen since the depression of the 1930s, particularly when unemployment is soaring. It is soaring most highly in Atlantic Canada, particularly when it is impossible for students to earn enough money either in summer employment, part-time jobs or a combination of both, even along with student loans and bursaries, to keep themselves in university.

What are we doing by bills such as Bill C-60, which continue the cuts to post-secondary education? We are effectively saying that post-secondary education in this country is the purview of the wealthy. This is not a Canadian tradition. This indeed is anathema to the Canadian tradition of post-secondary education.

In the province of Nova Scotia, the children of fishermen, farmers, coal-miners and steelworkers went to university because successive Canadian governments ensured that a university education was accessible to

everybody. It was not just accessible to the children of the wealthy classes.

Indeed, the Alma Mater of the Prime Minister of this country, St. Francis Xavier University in Antigonish has a tradition of educating those people from northern Nova Scotia, the vast majority of whom descend from the coal-miners, the steelworkers, the fishermen and farmers of Cape Breton Island.

How can we sit by and let this happen to our educational system? We hear and talk all the time about competitiveness. We talk about the globalization of our economy. We talk about the need for Canadians to be able to compete.

Is there one person in this Chamber who does not believe that we can produce competitive and well-educated people for our labour force? No, there is not. We have the potential to do it.

If we effectively shut off post-secondary education to those people who were not born with silver spoons in their mouths, then any idea that we may be competitive in a world market can just be thrown out the window.

Those universities with such great traditions, such great histories will soon be unable to function at anything close to what should be their capacity.

What is the reason for that? The reason is that this federal government has decided to shut down to a great degree the kind of funding that is necessary to keep those universities functioning. Along with the inability to function as institutes of education, we have a similar problem in the area of research and development. Where is research and development done in the main in Canada? In universities.

I look again at my own Alma Mater, Dalhousie University with its great medical school that has provided doctors for this country and internationally, as my colleague from Winnipeg would agree. The kind of research that Dalhousie University has become famous for has been cut back, cut back and cut back. What is the end result in that? It is twofold.

First of all, this country loses the opportunity to be home for the kinds of developments that Canada has become famous for. Second, our universities lose the kind of vibrant, creative talents who would have gone