

rises to help young people find work so they can return to school in the fall?

Hon. Pierre H. Cadieux (Minister of State (Fitness and Amateur Sport) and Minister of State (Youth) and Deputy Leader of the Government in the House of Commons): Mr. Speaker, I think everybody here will agree with the fact that the situation is difficult, particularly for the young people.

That is why this government is striving through its prosperity initiative, its budget, et cetera, to make sure the fundamentals are there so the youth of our country have the hope to find the necessary instruments to guarantee their future.

That being said, my colleague the minister of employment has put into place the appropriate programs to deal with those youth who are out of school. Through the Challenges program we have put in place the necessary programs and moneys to deal with those students at risk to make sure they do return to school. We believe the most fundamental of the instruments they need for the future is an education.

I am also encouraged by a recent report from Statistics Canada that says this summer more students will be able to find employment than last year. We have put more money into the program in order to facilitate that.

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JOB TRAINING

Mr. Jim Peterson (Willowdale): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the minister of employment.

On Tuesday he said Canada's small and medium-sized businesses are "doing nothing to help train workers".

The minister knows that the Canadian Federation of Independent Business study shows that last year these businesses spent \$9.6 billion for on-the-job training. When is this minister, who has cut government funding for training, going to stop blaming business for his own failures?

Hon. Bernard Valcourt (Minister of Employment and Immigration): I do not know what they take Canadians for, standing up in the House and telling people we have cut money for training when in fact the funds earmarked

for training have gone up by \$450 million. This is *chest le comble*.

As for his small business reference, I have not said that small business is doing nothing. I am comparing what Canadian corporations are doing in terms of training in Canada. If we have to compete in this world, we have to compare ourselves to our competing partners. American corporations spend twice as much as Canadian corporations to train people. The Japanese spend five times as much as Canadian corporations to train people and the Germans spend eight times as much. That is what I am referring to.

If he cares to go and talk to the small business people in Canada, he will find they agree they have to invest more in the people.

Mr. Jim Peterson (Willowdale): Mr. Speaker, let me clear this up. This minister has not increased government funding for training.

Mr. Valcourt: That is a lie.

Mr. Peterson: He said it is a lie.

Mr. Speaker: It is one thing to have disagreements but if somebody shouted out "It is a lie", I wish the member would just get up and withdraw it and let us get on with Question Period.

Mr. Valcourt: Mr. Speaker, I withdraw.

Mr. Peterson: This minister has simply diverted unemployment insurance funds which are contributed entirely by workers and employers to training. It is not government funding. It is out of their pockets.

Mr. Speaker: The hon. member is putting a question. I am sure the House will give him the courtesy to be heard.

Mr. Peterson: The Canadian Federation of Independent Business wrote in a letter to the minister and I quote:

The ignorance displayed by the minister is unbelievable, and his attempts to blame someone else for training difficulties is unconscionable.

I ask the minister, who said business does nothing to help train workers; if he will apologize for this gross misrepresentation.