

the Government cancelled the First Choice Program which would have put 100,000 young people into positions in which they could train on the job, building a bridge between the school and the workplace. In recent months the Government cancelled Katimavik. It cancelled the youth conference which then went ahead under the initiative of youth groups throughout the country. The Government cancelled the Minister's budget in her former Department and then, to save her face, it reintroduced her under the Department of Employment and Immigration.

The motion this afternoon is principally directed to the Challenge '86 program which deals with student summer employment. The subject is student summer employment. Each time we put questions to the Ministers and the Parliamentary Secretaries they do not answer them. I do not know if they are badly informed or are doing it on purpose, but they continually confuse youth unemployment statistics with student unemployment statistics. As we all know, to qualify for the Challenge '86 program you must be a person who will return to university or college in the fall. The general program for youth unemployment deals with that great mass of young people between the ages of 15 and 25 who are not going back to school. That is another group of people.

The high rate of unemployment to which the Parliamentary Secretary referred, which came down from 18 per cent to 16 per cent, refers to youth unemployment. It does not deal with the problem of student unemployment, which is dealt with separately by Statistics Canada. These are people who are going back to university or college in the fall. That is what we are talking about this afternoon and I do not want to hear statistics about the general unemployment rate. I know that helps to divert attention from what we are discussing. I do not want to hear statistics about the youth unemployment rate because that is not what we are discussing.

With respect, that is what has caused a lot of the disruptions in this House. If we received more statesmenlike and direct answers to the questions put in this House we would not have instances of what happened today in the House. Some of the Ministers on that side answer questions properly, but I am afraid that the Prime Minister (Mr. Mulroney) and many other Ministers do not and they actually mislead the House.

In this House I have brought to the attention of this Minister and the Minister of Employment and Immigration (Miss MacDonald) grievances which were brought to my attention in my constituency office and here in Ottawa by community groups which have either had their funding cut entirely this year or cut to a great extent in relation to what they received in previous years. The other day I asked the Minister to restore the budget and make the system more flexible. Instead of answering my question she said:

I find it rather deplorable that the Hon. Member for Notre-Dame-de-Grâce—Lachine East should be against jobs for ergotherapy students, for Concordia University physiotherapy students, among others, for Henri Bradet Centre gerontology students in his own riding. He is against that? I fail to understand.

### *Supply*

I do not know what I can call that to avoid violating the rules of the House, Mr. Speaker, but it is completely false and the Minister knows it is completely false. If she made a statement like that outside the House I could sue her for libel before the civil courts. For her to say that I am opposed to students at Concordia University, the Henri Bradet Centre and others getting jobs like that is false. She knows that I never said that. However, that is the kind of diversionary tactic that is used by her and other Ministers which causes the disruptions which have been happening in the House. The Minister knows very well that I support those projects. If she was in touch with her Department throughout the country she would know that I initialled support for those programs.

I am opposed to the cut of \$19 million in the SEED program, the primary program for student employment. I am also opposed to the Government's policy of giving more of that smaller amount of money to the business sector rather than the community voluntary sector. A lot of good community organizations are getting no money at all, or are being cut back considerably.

That was my question to the Minister. She brought up this red herring about me being opposed to some very good projects, which I was not opposed to at all. That was false. I cannot say she was lying to the House because they will throw me out again. I cannot say she was telling an untruth because they will throw me out again. However, she was not telling the truth when she said I opposed those programs. If she can find any quote of mine where I said I opposed those programs, in writing or verbally or whatever, I will make the greatest apology to her that one has ever heard in the House of Commons. I will even write letters to all the Montreal newspapers apologizing. I know she cannot do that.

• (1600)

This year the Government has cut the Challenge '86 program from \$205 million in 1985 to \$108 million in 1986. The SEED component was cut from \$146 million 1985 to \$127 million in 1986. To put that in better perspective, let us look at how it touches various groups in Toronto. For example, in 1985 the average grant to community groups in Toronto was \$15,600. In 1986 it is \$8,800, or a cut of 44 per cent. These figures are based on a survey of community groups in Toronto who were cut back this year. That is what I want the Minister to deal with. Explain that. Justify that. In 1985 the average number of student work weeks was 66.5 for community voluntary groups. In 1986 it was 36.2 work weeks, a decrease of 46 per cent. That is the sort of thing we want answers to.

The Minister says there are no quotas limiting the number of voluntary community projects which can be accepted. Let me put this on the record. In the 1984 Summer Canada Program, a carry-over of the program put in place by the Liberal Government, 100 per cent of the SEED money went to non-profit and community groups. In 1985 some 80 per cent of the money in the SEED component went to voluntary community groups. This year so far it is about 65 per cent. So we had