

had a different name, I suppose because the Conservative Party, after delaying for two months, wanted to put its own stamp on it. Instead of calling it "Summer Canada", it was called "Challenge '85".

When the Minister announced the program on February 6, she gave the impression that the program was ready to proceed. I am raising this matter again today because she misled the House on that date. When the Minister announced the program on February 6 she gave a certain number of details, and we had the impression on that date that finally the program was ready to go ahead. However, as of last week—two and a half weeks after the announcement—the program was still not ready.

It had not been decided by many of the provinces whether the program would be a joint program, or that there would be two separate programs, federal and provincial. As well, the provincial insert sheets for the application forms were not ready for potential applicants. Furthermore, the deadlines and the selection processes were not clear. For example, last Friday I was told by one of the officials of the Department of Employment and Immigration in Montreal that the program would be constituency based. But another official from another office told me that it was going to be regionally based.

This is another example of Conservative incompetence, Mr. Speaker. The Government cancelled the Summer Canada Program on November 8. It bumbled and fumbled for three months. Finally it announced a program on February 6 even though it was not ready, and it was not ready because the details had still not been worked out. I presume that the announcement of February 6 was simply to put off people like myself and other Hon. Members who have been asking the question over and over again, "When are you going to announce that program?" I called again today and I was told that finally the application forms are being sent out to the people in the Montreal area. I don't know what the experience is in other parts of the country but I am told that in Toronto last week they still did not have the Ontario insert forms for the application forms. It is regrettable, Mr. Speaker, that the Government, having played politics with this matter, now leaves students holding the bag.

I must say that my complaint is not so much against the program but against the process, against the administration. During the election campaign the Conservative Party gave the impression that it had all of the answers to unemployment in this country and that if the Conservatives were elected those problems would be solved. Once the election was over, the Conservatives announced that they were going to consult with that group, or this group, with the provinces, with labour, with big business, with little business and with community groups and so on. It then became fairly evident that they were looking for a program. If the Conservatives had said that in the first place, before the election, we would have accepted that as reasonable. But, no, they gave the impression that they had the answers and then started looking for the answers; in effect, trying to reinvent the wheel.

Adjournment Debate

In a statement by the Minister of Finance (Mr. Wilson) on November 8 cancellation of Summer Canada was announced. It was later announced that the Government was going to look for a new program, or consult on a new program. The new program was finally announced on February 6, two months late. It would have been bad enough had the program started from that date but, as I pointed out, it is just now getting ready. I feel that is a terrible condemnation of the Government on its approach to the very serious problem of unemployment among our students.

Let us hope, Mr. Speaker, that despite these unpardonable delays, the Minister and the Parliamentary Secretary, and those who support the Government, will listen to these pleas, not only from the Opposition, as we are only 70 in number, but from the many student groups and community groups across the country. The government should finally get this summer program fully under way as soon as possible to make sure that students are working by at least May 1, 1984 in order that they can earn enough money to pay for their tuition and other expenses next year.

● (1805)

[*Translation*]

Mr. Jean-Guy Hudon (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Employment and Immigration): Mr. Speaker, on behalf of the Minister of Employment and Immigration (Miss MacDonald), I would like to respond to the question asked by the Hon. Member for Notre-Dame-de-Grâce-Lachine-East (Mr. Allmand) in this House on February 5, 1985, concerning the announcement made by the Government of its summer employment program for the young, and to his request for information on the nature of those initiatives.

On February 6, 1985, the Minister of Employment and Immigration and the Minister of State (Youth), (Mrs. Champagne) announced the program Challenge '85, a summer employment program for students, with a \$205 million funding. That program should not only give students an opportunity to earn money to pay for their tuition fees, but also create jobs that will promote their career goals and a better preparation for their future participation in the labour market.

The Hon. Member is under the impression that the delay in announcing the program is a serious insult to the Canadian students. On behalf of the Minister, I would point out that any program hastily introduced, without specific planning, without input from the regions and without taking the time needed to obtain a commitment from our economic partners, including the Provinces, the private sector and others, would be a still more serious insult.

Challenge '85 is a totally new approach to job creation for students. Instead of offering students pre-organized federal projects that would simply give them an opportunity to earn money to pay for their tuition fees, we in the Government are challenging our economic partners to work with us for the creation of meaningful jobs that will enable students to opti-