

In his statement the Prime Minister speaks about the importance of creating job opportunities and says that "every effort to assist on the part of governments and business is justified." He goes on to say that "there is equal justification for assistance to students who do not seek work but who are nevertheless desirous of occupying their summer vacations in an otherwise rewarding and worthwhile fashion." I would agree there is justification for assisting those students who wish to spend their time in travel, improving themselves and seeing the country. I think this is important. But I cannot agree that it is equally as important as providing job opportunities for students who need to earn money in order to remain in school or university.

It is very clear from looking at the material handed out by the Department of Manpower that it is private industry that will have to provide the great mass of jobs for students this summer as was the case last summer. It is very clear that no effective program has been announced even at this date to really encourage the expansion of employment by private industry. It is equally apparent to all of us that the main reason so many students will have such terrible difficulty obtaining employment or will fail to obtain employment this summer is the slack that exists in the economy which is the result of the government's slowing down of the economy and its glib and smug acceptance of the amount of unemployment that exists in Canada today. The prospects faced by these students this summer underline the need for more rapid expansion in the economy not only for the benefit of students but for all youth and all unemployed. The government has neglected its responsibilities and added to this neglect by delaying even this announcement until the middle of March.

I conclude my few remarks by reading what the Prime Minister said to the students in the course of his remarks:

There is work to be done; there are tasks to be performed; there are experiences to be gained. There is a whole country to be explored. There is a generation desirous of improving the world in which it finds itself.

I simply ask the government, why does it not give the kids a chance to do it?

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. David Orlikow (Winnipeg North): Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister comes into the House today and makes a statement. Arrangements have already been made for a group of four or five cabinet ministers to flesh out the supposed details later this afternoon in a press conference. I hope that the members of the press who attend that conference and the public outside this chamber will keep in mind that the 990,000 students who the Minister of Manpower and Immigration says will be looking for work this summer will be joining the more than 700,000 people who are looking for work at the present time, and that a very large percentage of these people are looking for work because of the policy of slowing down the economy deliberately adopted by this government a year and a half ago.

Student Summer Employment

What does the Prime Minister say? He says that the government will provide \$15 million for employment programs for students, which is a very good objective. He says that the money will be provided to between 4,000 and 5,000 voluntary organizations which are asked today, on March 16, to come forward with ideas to put students to work, not make-work programs but programs that will provide useful work. In five weeks a very large number of university students will be finishing their university terms and a month later high school students will be entering the job market. These voluntary organizations have been given between five and eight weeks to develop meaningful projects. Nothing could be more ridiculous than to expect that really useful projects will be developed in that time. I am not critical of the voluntary organizations nor am I critical of the students who will be hired, but I say to the Prime Minister and to the Secretary of State that when this summer is over we will find that a good deal of the money went for the same kind of useless projects which we saw operated by the Company of Young Canadians, and the blame will not rest with the voluntary organizations nor the students but with the government.

Why did the government have to wait until March to announce this program? They knew what happened last year. The Minister of Manpower and Immigration said in his statement that 940,000 students were looking for work last year and there will be 50,000 more this year. We know from the figures which the minister gave us at the end of last year that 50 per cent of the students who looked for work last year did not get work for more than half the time for which they were available for work. Surely the government should have started last September to work out the kind of programs which they have announced today.

The Prime Minister said there had been close consultation with the provinces. I know of one province at least where the first official announcement to the province of this program was in a telephone call to the premier last week. If that is close co-operation, I do not know what co-operation means. So I say that to a large extent the employment program will be meaningless.

• (2:30 p.m.)

I want to deal now with the travel program which is divided into two parts. The first is the hostel program. That is a very useful program because a large number of students who cannot get work will be moving across the country. We see more of this every year, and it is good for the federal government and the provinces to co-operate in providing facilities where these students can stay in the cities they visit. I approve of that.

I want to say something about the other part of the program, the \$3,750,000 which is being provided for young people with respect to two projects in Canada and two projects overseas. I am all in favour of students having the opportunity to broaden their experience, but what kind of students are going to be able to spend a substantial part of the summer travelling, partly at their own expense and partly at the expense of the government of