

Teenagers fear holocaust on top of unemployment

5.9.86
GU
EFFECT

Nuclear war ranks second to unemployment in the fears of teenagers, the British Association was told yesterday. One in three are worried about the threat of a holocaust, and only 11 per cent think governments will get together to talk things out, according to Ms Pam Gillies of Nottingham University.

She interviewed 108 pupils aged 15 and 18 in Nottingham schools to find what worried the children most. All except those who had secured jobs or were going on to the sixth form ranked unemployment as their chief concern. One 15-year-old boy said: "I'm so frightened of being on the dole and being useless, it would kill me."

Boys coped with the fear by working harder for exams to get better qualifications, or by consoling themselves

with the thought that the Government could help by creating more jobs.

Ms Gillies, lecturer in community health at the university's medical school, warned of the possibility of unemployment affecting their future physical and mental health.

Many of the girls were resigned to unemployment. One said: "There are so few jobs around now. And those that there are will go to blokes first—we just have to put up with it."

Girls were more pessimistic about the probable occurrence of nuclear war, and a substantial proportion of both sexes felt helpless or fatalistic about the prospects.

"Some moron will press the red button and we'll all be blown to smithereens and there's nothing we can do about it", said one.