

This is a very embarrassing clarification indeed for some manpower centre officials. Two different manpower centres will often give a different interpretation of this rule.

I will give a few examples in a moment.

Therefore, the program applies not only to workers but also to most housewives.

There, things become complicated.

Moreover, it is not indispensable for apprentices to have been out of school for a year.

There things get even more complicated. In the case of an apprentice, if he was a student, if he has not been out of school for a year. I just had such a case—the person had left school nine months before. I told him: It is useless, you have not been out of school for one year. There, we are given another precision. I do not know their definition of the word "apprentice". If he is an apprentice who works as such in a shop, it is not necessary for him to have been out of school for a year, I think.

I hope the minister will be kind enough to correct me if I am wrong, but I understand that the technician has completed his course and has gone to work as an apprentice; if, after nine months, he wants to get training in another field, he can be allowed to take those courses.

● (9:10 p.m.)

The three-year rule applies only to training allowances. The program that the Acting Leader of the Official Opposition initiated in 1960 provided only for small training allowances. Those allowances were far from enough for the workers who needed retraining. As a result, even though that program was designed to help the jobless, the average age of those who attended our training courses was only 22, whereas the average age of the unemployed was 35.

The new program is designed to help adults who need it most.

On that point, I fully agree with the minister that adults who need it most should be helped. Not old people. Last winter and also this year, people of 57, 58, 60 and 61 years of age have been seen to return to school at the 4th or 5th grade level. What a joke. The only reason they go there is to get their cheque and meanwhile, they take the place of workers of 32, 33 or 34 who wish to retrain.

They are entitled to allowances if they have dependants.

I must stress the fact that nobody has to register in a Canadian manpower centre or in any other institution, or to really have a job in order to be considered a member of the labour force.

Things get a little complicated here and what is happening now? Well, if a mother of ten or eleven children decides at the age of 49

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or 50 to complete her studies, she will leave her family during the day to take these courses, but not really to study. Of course, some of these women start afresh to improve their minds, but they go there mainly to get their cheque and they come back in the evening. This will not bring much profit to our population.

All this means, is that it is not necessary to be at school or at home, instead of looking actively for work. I understand that your criticism applied in fact to the former Program 5 which was replaced by the new act adopted in April 1967.

I thank you for having given me, through your speech in this house, an opportunity to clarify certain aspects of training in our act.

I think that if the crowd of new employees that will deal with these functions can interpret this act as clearly as you can I think it will benefit the population in the years to come.

But, once again, that is not what happens. On the one hand, there will be 76 federal employees, and the other hand, the provincial employees as in all the other joint plans. That is the source of the conflict.

There comes a time when the representative of the school board does not sing the same tune as the federal representative and the victim of the misunderstanding is the candidate who is simply turned down.

That is the type of case we have in our areas at the present time. I studied this one case: a fellow who is unemployed, the typical guy for admission to the course went to the office at Roberval. He was just turned down. He went to the Dolbeau office, where he was accepted. Then, a transfer was operated. In the meantime, his wife, who had completed the 9th grade years ago, wanted to repeat that year again, in order to attend a high-fashion training course for which Grade 9 education was required. In view of this complication, the man was accepted but his wife was turned down the next day, and I am still wondering why. We are now trying to locate the person actually responsible for this situation, but with all this red tape, I think it will take a long time to find out who was responsible.

I have here the case of a young man who dropped out of school four years ago. He has a grade eight education, but he was refused. Why? There is no way of knowing. Unemployed, he simply wants to acquire skills, but he is refused. One Monday, the representative of a regional school tells him: We have no more room, no more classrooms, no more