

*Manpower and Immigration Council*

courses in the city of Toronto under the program now administered and paid for by the federal government has dropped disastrously. The figures are as follows: In February of 1967 the people who were taking training under programs 3, 4, 5 and 6 in the city of Toronto numbered 5,980. On March 31, 1967 the number of people taking training under these programs was 5,970. At the end of April the number was 5,440. By May 31, the number was 5,134. By June 30 the number had dropped to 4,526. By July 31 the number had dropped to 4,132, and by August 31 the number had dropped to 3,711. The number is down by 40 per cent. This is a disaster in a country which the Economic Council of Canada says needs to have a much more skilled work force.

These figures do not tell the whole story. They do not tell how serious the situation is. For example, amongst the 4,100 people in the city of Toronto who were taking training on July 31 of this year there were still a large number of people taking training who had registered and started their training before the new program took effect.

Let us look at the situation with regard to applications. In March, 1966 there were 1,235 applications in the city of Toronto. In March of this year there were 1,524 applications, an increase over last year. In April, 1966 there were 830 applications; in April of this year there were only 338 applications, a drop of more than 50 per cent. In May, 1966 there were 805 applications for training; in May of this year there was a slight increase, 971. In June, 1966—this is when the government's new program was beginning to bite and take effect—there were 830 applications in the city of Toronto; in June of this year there were 262. In July, 1966 there were 805 applications; in July of this year there was a grand total, Mr. Chairman, of 92. In August last year there were 995 applications; in August of this year there were 239. In September of last year there were 1,154 applications; in September this year there were 278 applications.

• (4:40 p.m.)

So, Mr. Chairman, the picture is clear. In the space of one year there has been in the city of Toronto, one of the two largest and most important employment and labour centres in Canada, a reduction of substantially more than 50 per cent in the number of applications. The government and the minister took on this job and told us they knew what they were doing, that the provinces

[Mr. Orlikow.]

were exaggerating their problems and difficulties. Yet here is the situation, and it is even worse than we predicted.

Is this true only of the city of Toronto, Mr. Chairman? No, it is not. I have been given to understand that the Vancouver city school board has virtually abandoned its English upgrading program because of the new policies and regulations which have been made under this program.

Let me refer for a moment to the situation in the city of Ottawa. In September, 1966 there were between 200 and 300 students who applied and registered for upgrading programs. These were people who were referred to the school in Ottawa by manpower officials in this city. Compared with the 200 to 300 who applied last year only 30 to 40 have applied this year. These are applications for upgrading programs involving study in grades seven, eight, nine and ten.

I said, Mr. Chairman, that I was not going to quote the minister, but during a debate some months ago he said that the new programs would permit people to take skill courses lasting up to one year. Although I have not been able to find the exact quotation, on one occasion his parliamentary secretary, the hon. member for Hamilton East, said that every Canadian who met the other qualifications would be eligible for one year's upgrading training and one year's skill training, or a maximum of two years of training.

I now understand—if I am wrong about this I should be glad to be corrected by the minister or his parliamentary secretary—that orders have gone out to the manpower counsellors to do their best to eliminate all students who want to take upgrading courses. I understand that the department has issued a directive to the effect that skill training which has been provided by the manpower department for the select few to whom I have already referred will be limited not to the one year program about which the minister talked but to a program lasting a maximum of 26 weeks.

As I have said on other occasions—and I do want to give credit where credit is due—the original program was begun under the former government by the then minister of labour, the hon. member for Ontario. It is a program under which the federal government has spent more than \$600 million to help the provinces build technical and vocational training schools. In light of the annual reports that we have received from the Economic Council of Canada and in light of the