

*Adjournment Debate*

I must remind members on both sides that the new rules call for four minutes, and two minutes and not seven and three. We will be going past the time. I will let people go four and two. Please help whoever is in the chair during the adjournment motion.

## EMPLOYMENT

**Mr. Maurizio Bevilacqua (York North):** Madam Speaker, on October 10 I rose in this House to ask the Minister of Employment and Immigration a very important question regarding the 1.5 million Canadians who are unemployed.

I asked the minister when the government would face reality and take all necessary steps to halt the deindustrialization of this nation and put Canadians back to work.

The reality I was speaking about was the reality of the unemployed in the current recession. Unlike past recessions, jobs that are being lost will never reappear. Factories whose doors have been shut will never reopen.

Unless this government fulfils its responsibilities, Canadians will be stuck with a decimated economy and economic structure. Another side of the sad reality is a youth unemployment rate of 16 per cent. That is 400,000 young people out of work.

This is the generation that, after all, expects to pay for its standard of living in the future. I wonder how it will do it while it stands in the unemployment lines of this nation today.

These realities seem to matter little to the minister. When he answered my question, he made a number of statements which I believe deserve to be closely analysed.

First, the minister said: "I do not know why he and his party and its cohorts in the other place fought Bill C-21 for so long". We fought Bill C-21 for two very good reasons.

As Liberals, we believe that the government has a role to play in helping the unemployed. Bill C-21 took the government out of the UI fund, leaving the entire burden to employers and employees.

Bill C-21 also made it more difficult for unemployed Canadians to qualify for unemployment insurance.

Again, in these difficult times, Liberals believe in helping Canadians and not in abandoning them.

The minister also said, referring to the unemployed: "This year these people will get \$1.8 billion more in training". That is incorrect. Last year the training budget was \$1.4 billion and this year it is \$1.8 billion.

From that it seems like the unemployed will get an additional \$400 million instead of \$1.8 billion. Even more, the modest figure of \$400 million is questionable.

As the Canadian Labour Force Development Board pointed out, half of that sum will go to making up the \$200 million that was cut out of the budget of the Canadian Jobs Strategy over the last two years.

Finally, even a \$200 million increase is an illusion. The money that will be spent on training programs comes from the extra moneys that the government squeezed out of Canadians by increasing UI premiums and by tightening eligibility requirements.

In the end, we see the minister's statement of \$1.8 billion more in training is not at all as impressive as it sounded. This case is a good example of this government's indifference toward training.

Between 1987 and 1990 federal expenditures on training as a percentage of the GDP fell from .19 per cent to .17 per cent. In 1988 the average Japanese worker received 200 hours of training. In Sweden it was 170 hours and in Canada it was less than seven hours.

If Canada wants to compete globally, we have to start moving in the opposite direction. The German electronics giant Siemens Electric has said that it would like to create 9,000 high-tech jobs in Canada but worries that this country will not be able to supply a skilled work force.

We will need those high-tech jobs to maintain the social programs and standard of living we have all grown accustomed to. To compete globally we must help unemployed Canadians and young Canadians get ready for the 21st century with a modern day, up-to-date training system.

• (1830)

The government fails to see that. Between 1985 and 1990, it cut the SEED program in half taking nearly 40,000 jobs away from young Canadians. The govern-