

interpretations by U.S. trade courts as to what constitutes "general" have been widely divergent⁹⁴.

4.1.2 Training and Education:

A key characteristic of the labour market in the 1980s has been the growing demand for well-educated and highly-skilled workers. This trend reflects changes in the occupational mix of employment towards managerial and professional jobs, which require higher levels of education and skill, as well as increases in the skill content and educational requirements of most occupations.

Thus, education and training are becoming increasingly important, both to ensure full utilization of the labour force and to take advantage of the emerging opportunities open to Canadian companies. Mr. Jean de Grandpré told the Senate Foreign Affairs Committee in December, 1988 that, "there will be a shortage of certain skills in this country in the very near future, especially if universities continue to be underfunded"⁹⁵.

Even though these trends are clear and, as well, are commonly agreed upon by government, industry and educational authorities, the supply of well-qualified workers in certain occupations has not been keeping pace with demand. The strongest evidence of substantial and growing mismatch between available and required skills is the growing number of job vacancies that go unfilled. In fact, according to Statistics Canada, 14 per cent of manufacturing firms reported their production activities were impeded by a lack of skilled labour⁹⁶.

Another study, by the Canadian Federation of Independent Business in early 1988, found 43 per cent of small businesses citing shortages of qualified labour as a major problem.

The Advisory Council on Adjustment viewed education and training as key to the success of Canada and for individual companies. However, the Advisory Council also pointed out that few corporations undertake training and/or retraining in Canada. According to the *Report*:

⁹⁴ "General availability" would seem to be almost self-explanatory. Nevertheless, differing interpretations have been made. It has been variously determined that "specific" benefit can be derived from government programmes based on take-up rates -- on the distribution and number of eligible firms which actually make use of the programme -- even though programmes are available for all. In other cases, a programme for the fishing or forestry industry as a whole have been considered not sufficiently general, but would need to be available to both, or all, industries in order to be deemed "general".

⁹⁵ CANADA. *Senate Committee on Foreign Affairs, Proceedings*, December 29, 1988.

⁹⁶ STATISTICS CANADA, *Business Conditions Survey*, October 1988.