

ing the \$23 million cut for Manpower training programs vital to many women throughout this country.

My specific area of concern is the uncertain future of some 22 Outreach projects, some of which have already been cut. The others are now under review, one of them to be reviewed later this week. Since the minister stated that all Outreach projects would be fairly and carefully assessed before their future was determined, would he not agree that any fair evaluation of these projects must include direct input from those working on the projects and some survey of those served by them?

Hon. Bud Cullen (Minister of Employment and Immigration): Mr. Speaker, I have indicated that each of the Outreach projects will be checked out. Some of them have, in fact, been continued; some at a lower rate of participation from the financial standpoint. Others were cancelled because they did not meet the criteria. Some were initiated in 1975 and they have had as much as \$200,000 of taxpayers' money to get them operational.

We have to do an evaluation on an annual basis, as requested by the Auditor General. We think we are being responsible in this regard. They have not all been cancelled. We have also indicated in our programs that we want to see that women coming into the workforce have an opportunity to play their rightful role. We have set quotas in some areas that are not traditionally occupied by women. I am happy to say that in employment programs, Canada Works and training programs, women form an even larger percentage of participation than they have in the actual workforce.

Mr. Broadbent: Mr. Speaker, all of that was interesting, and some of it was even true. I should like the minister now to answer the question. Since two of these projects which have served women very well throughout the country—the one in London has had a 30 per cent placement rate, which is better than the average for Manpower centres across the country—and considering that the review of the Ottawa project and the Toronto project did not include input from the projects themselves and did not include any survey of the clients they were servicing, will the minister assure the House that all future assessments will include input by the project people and the surveys of their clients?

Mr. Cullen: Mr. Speaker, I disagree with the hon. member. There has been a solid and honest review of each and every one of these projects to determine whether they meet the criteria. Some of them have not met the placement criteria so far as finding jobs for women is concerned or finding jobs for people who meet the particular criteria. In some of them there is an overlapping between what the program does, what the Canada employment centre is set up to do and what it does very well at the expense of the taxpayer.

We do not think a duplication of that effort best serves the needs of women. For that reason, the funding for some projects has been reduced because they are not meeting the criteria they were established to meet.

Oral Questions

Mr. Broadbent: Mr. Speaker, one despairs of getting a direct answer to a direct question. I asked the minister if he would consider input from the project people themselves, or if they would survey their clients. He has evaded the question twice and I suspect I am not going to get an answer.

I should like to put my last question to the minister. Since the overwhelming evidence from people outside the political parties entirely has been that these projects have been remarkably successful and remarkably beneficial to women, would the minister consider giving to each of the 22 Outreach projects affecting women a three-month extension so that there will be a fair review process into which they can have direct input before they are cancelled?

Mr. Cullen: Mr. Speaker, the hon. member is already drawing on the experience we followed. Where we found particular projects were having some difficulty, we extended the time and the funding for a period of three months to enable them to adjust to the situation and possibly find other sources of funding for the portion we were withdrawing. In some instances that was necessary. Some of the projects were finished. They were not meeting the criteria and were able to wind down at a time when they anticipated they would be closed.

Last November, we commented that this kind of investigation was in progress and gave the organization adequate time. The hon. member suggests they have all been discontinued, but in fact they have not. A lot of projects are still in place and are still being funded, but they must meet the criteria and not duplicate efforts that we are performing, and performing very well, through our employment centres.

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REGIONAL ECONOMIC EXPANSION

INQUIRY AS TO ORGANIZATION TO REPLACE CANADIAN COUNCIL OF RURAL DEVELOPMENT

Mr. Eudore Allard (Rimouski): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of Regional Economic Expansion. In view of the recent budgetary cuts inflicted upon the Canadian Council of Rural Development, which is made up of several rural organizations and whose members are responsible for determining what problems and difficulties they have to face, especially with regard to determining the priorities of rural development in underprivileged areas, can the minister tell the House whether he has provided for replacing this service so that the population in those areas are not totally deprived of the priceless advice of that body?

Hon. Marcel Lessard (Minister of Regional Economic Expansion): Mr. Speaker, when expenditures have to be cut it is indeed always difficult to determine what programs will be cancelled or cut back without hampering too seriously the objectives sought. In fact, in August when we had to resign