

*Manpower and Immigration Council*

bill, the council will consist of 16 responsible members who will be assisted by four different boards, advisory boards made up of 60 members, which makes a total of 76 members. All those people, as stated in the bill, are to advise the minister. In other words, our minister will have plenty of advice from now on.

They will have:

(a) to advise the minister on all matters pertaining to the effective utilization and development of manpower resources in Canada, including immigrants to Canada and their adjustment to Canadian life;

(b) to refer those matters that the minister requests or that the council deems appropriate, to the appropriate board for a report;

(c) to advise the minister with respect to any report received by the council from a board;

(d) to advise the minister on the establishment of local and regional manpower committees pursuant to Part III; and

(e) to advise the minister on such other matters as the minister may refer to the council for its consideration.

Mr. Speaker, I suppose that after all those referrals, the candidate will have to wait two, three, four or five months, maybe a year, before being told finally: My friend, you cannot qualify for those retraining courses. We already have abundant proof of such a situation.

In fact, I have communicated with the minister who is quite favourable to our requests in that regard. It is not the minister that I wish to blame. I mainly want to stress the intricacies of this legislation similar to all the others, to indicate that those who are responsible for the implementation of those pieces of legislation are mixed up themselves, in short, that they often cannot see their way clear. Then, we come up against cases as funny as those which have occurred in my area the past week, that is since the beginning of the courses. For example, just to mention one of those cases, when we were discussing the eligibility of a candidate, and since the minister was quite often out of his office, I received from his executive assistant the following letter, and I quote:

Under the new—

That letter dates back to July 28.

—adult occupational training program in operation since April 1, 1967, the federal government pays the full cost of the training courses including allowances.

That is rather clear.

—training courses are purchased from the government of the province, from private institutions or from industry after consultation with the provincial authorities.

[Mr. Gauthier.]

That is where some difficulties arise because if a list of the institutions involved was available, it would be more useful. In fact, the case that has occurred is precisely one involving a young man who went to take a course in hairdressing and it is only after repeated investigations, after a month and a half, that it was discovered that the institution had not been recognized by the government.

At first, this might seem like a trifle but if such cases are multiplied, I guarantee you that many are lost. It seems to me that in order to correct such a situation, it should be possible to obtain from the department a list of the institutions officially recognized by the government so as to direct those who write to us.

After all, our job as members is to serve our people, and to guide them and I think this would be of some help to us. Then, we would not have to keep running to the minister or to the department to try to find out the truth in this area.

Just recently, I questioned the minister again about certain things. I find that, in spite of his reply, there remains some ambiguity in certain respects. His reply, dated October 31, read as follows:

Last Thursday, during the debate on the estimates of my department, you asked certain questions on our manpower programs. I had hoped to answer them without delay but, as you know, I did not have the opportunity of doing so. I am therefore writing to you to explain at least the main points you brought up.

I want to thank the hon. minister because he never fails to answer our questions promptly. Frankly, I was afraid he might grow tired of all the questions, all the letters, but no, we always receive a proper reply.

You have mentioned the three-year rule applicable to training allowances. You seem to think that, to be part of the active population since the last three years, it is necessary to be registered in our manpower centres.

In this respect, when I asked the minister—and I am very pleased with his information since, as it happens, I discussed the matter with some manpower centres officials in my riding, who told me that it was necessary to be enrolled at the manpower centres to be part of the labour force—he answered that it was not necessary. Again the matter is solved. I continue quoting his letter:

I should like to clarify this essential aspect of eligibility to the training program. Anyone who has quit school, in other words, who has not had formal training for a year, and is a year older than the mandatory school attendance age, is eligible for the training program.