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MANPOWER POLICIES AND AUTOMATION

The manpower policies of the Federal Government in a world of rapid technological change were described as follows in a speech read to the British Columbia Federation of Labour in Vancouver recently by Mr. John Munro, Member of Parliament, representing the Minister of Labour, Mr. Jean Marchand:

...The Department of Manpower and Immigration does not exist at the moment, of course. It will have no legal form until Parliament acts to approve its new name. But in the meantime, under the title of the old Department of Citizenship and Immigration, we are moving ahead rapidly on many fronts.

Let me say at the outset that we do not consider ourselves just another planning department. Planning is very useful and very necessary, and no government department should be without it. But plans are worth nothing if they are not implemented, and our basic philosophy is not so much to create new ideas and new programmes, but to implement those programmes which are needed to assist the growth of Canada by helping people to get better jobs, and to do better jobs.

Within this rather sweeping description of our objectives, there are some specific points I could outline. They include:

- (1) The adaptation and expansion of the role and functions of the National Employment Service to meet technological change;
- (2) the co-ordination of immigration policy and practices with the demands of Canada's labour market;
- (3) the education, training and re-training of the labour force;

- (4) research and the provision of more and better statistical information on a national scale, in order to plan and implement our programmes more effectively.

The key to the approach of the new Manpower and Immigration Department will be a new look in the old National Employment Service. Specifically, it will be the local, or area, office of this service where the basic action will take place. Here will be the "sharp end" of the battle. Here is where we will do our job for both employees and employers....

NEW EMPLOYMENT SERVICE

In the past, the National Employment Service has been mainly concerned with checking on and placing the unemployed. We are now in the process of broadening the functions of this agency to the point that, in the years to come, it will be unrecognizable both to the public and to those who now staff it.

In reorganizing and reconstituting the National Employment Service, our ultimate aim is to ensure that each area office comes to play a full and vital part in the life of the community. By this we mean it will be a professional consultative service to employees and employers alike. It will offer a whole spectrum of services to workers, and to management as well. It will continue to act in its traditional role as a source of supply of workers for the widest possible variety of professions and occupations. And it will offer a diverse range of services to employees, including job opportunities, counselling, assistance in training, and manpower mobility. There will be many more.