

*National Training Act*

understand that under this situation the Japanese government sees little need to control or regulate the kind or the method of industrial training. The on-the-job training is designed exactly for the needs of the job the company or organization wants the individual to do.

How does this compare with Canada? In the late 1970s the Japanese had almost doubled the number of firms providing in-house training. This is due in part to the fact that our labour force is much more mobile and our employee-employer relationships are adversarial in nature. We have very low levels of employee training in the private sector, with no incentives for improvement. We are not training our workers adequately for the jobs that exist today, let alone for the multiplicity of jobs that are being created in the technology based industries.

Coupled with this is the report by a Department of Employment and Immigration study group stating that skilled Europeans no longer want to work in Canada. It stated:

Canadian wages and working conditions are relatively less attractive now than in the past, in comparison with those prevailing in western European countries, which have traditionally supplied this country with higher level skills.

So what do we have here? We have had a private sector which has had no incentive to train employees, and a government which, by the minister's own admission, has failed to provide for the training of at least 45,000 skilled workers required over the next five years.

On top of this, we have a government which allows foreign producers to eliminate jobs of skilled Canadians at home. Does the minister recall my question to the Minister of Finance (Mr. MacEachen) last week? If not, I will refresh his memory. I asked when the Lindsay rubber plant can expect the results of the investigation requested of the anti-dumping tribunal. A South Korean company's dumping of rubber products in Canada resulted in the loss of 30 full-time jobs at the Lindsay rubber plant. I have seen no response from the minister. Obviously the government is not too worried about the loss of 30 skilled labour jobs in Lindsay. It is interesting to note that South Korea's record of on-the-job training is much closer to that of Japan than to our poor record. It is about time we were thinking seriously about our retraining.

• (1710)

I read the minister's presentation to the federal-provincial conference of January 11, 1982, on skill training for the 1980s. I understand the proposals for the National Training Act were the result of the task force on labour market development in the 1980s, the report of the task force on employment opportunities for the 1980s, and extensive consultation with provinces and non-government organizations. This sounds like a great deal of consultation and co-operation, and it would seem everyone should be happy. It must therefore have puzzled provincial officials and non-governmental organization officials at that conference when the minister said:

The main federal role is to determine the nature and scale of adult training needs, and to provide the leadership and financial assistance required by individuals, firms, groups and provinces to enable them to undertake or provide the required training. Provincial governments and their institutions are the main providers of training courses in an institutional setting and are responsible for their development, management and articulation. Although both orders of government have their main responsibilities, they must function in close collaboration to achieve common goals.

They were told the federal government will decide what the training needs are in the provinces, where the people should be trained, and what the priority jobs are in the country. It is then up to the provinces and non-governmental organizations to provide the programs. No wonder the provinces express deep concern. They worry about a program which allows the federal government to decide what is a priority job and shift funds from an existing program with or without their consultation. It is a program which allows the federal government to designate institutions, outside a particular province and possibly outside the country, to provide instruction in federally-designated skilled areas. The tabling of this bill has not lessened their fears. Clause 12 states:

The Commission may establish with the government of a province a joint committee to assess the requirements of the labour market for skilled workers and the means necessary to meet such requirements.

The word "may" is what causes the worry. The existing legislation requires the Canada Employment and Immigration Commission to establish such a joint committee at the request of any province, and the bill says they may establish such a committee on their own initiative. There is no requirement that they do so, and absolutely no requirement for them to act upon the request for one by any province. Surely, if the government is committed to this badly needed bill, it will consider amending this clause. It was not part of Bill C-8, which we proposed in 1979 and which the Liberal Party forced to die on the Order Paper. It should not be in this bill. If anything is needed to make this program work, it is intergovernmental co-operation.

Now that I have pointed out objections to certain parts of this legislation, I would like to commend the minister on others. The extension of the allowable time for training beyond 52 weeks in higher level skills should be of assistance to those truly interested in learning a skill. Increased income support rate, should, as well, entice laid-off apprentices and workers to train for those jobs in which there is a shortage of people. Careful screening must be done, of course, to ensure those taking training are interested in getting a job, not just in retraining funds.

In closing, I want to reiterate my concerns about this bill. The National Training Act must above all be enacted in total co-operation and consultation with the provinces. In designating priority occupations, the provinces must be consulted. Occupations in agriculture, small businesses and other skill-related fields must be protected from unjust loss of funds. In short, the total needs of the economy, employers and employees must be reflected in Bill C-115.