

who had been refused, I am glad I was not. This woman concludes by saying that she considers this situation most discouraging and wasteful, and so do I, and I know the minister will too. Let him admit women to the labour market, which has been far too much confined for far too long to men. I am referring to the official labour market; I know there is plenty of labour outside the official labour market. I think it is high time this situation was recognized.

I should like to refer to some statements made by the executive director of the Visiting Homemakers' Association, who was speaking in Ottawa the other day. She was addressing a meeting of homemakers which was also attended by the Children's Aid Society, the Catholic Family Service and the Family Service Centre of Ottawa. At the meeting Mrs. Pincock expressed concern about Canada manpower legislation which restricts potential homemakers from receiving a training allowance if they have not been in the labour market for three years. She went on to say:

Women who have raised their own families and who are now ready to embark on a second career are in this category, which is probably our best source of supply.

And so I believe. I believe that in neglecting the source of supply of labour that women can provide, we are cutting down our source of national production and services in a most unnecessary and alarming way. I want now to read a letter that came to me from an administrator of the manpower retraining program. Obviously I am not going to identify him or his city. The letter is dated April 2 and reads:

Thank you so much for your persistent interest and awareness of the Adult Occupational Training Act, with special emphasis on your recent amendment, Bill C-199.

Since 1967, thousands of women have been discriminated against because of the narrow interpretation of this aspect of the act.

As an administrator of Retraining Programs, I am appalled, shocked, and angered at the manner in which Canada Manpower officials apply the numerous rigid regulations to the citizens of Canada.

OTA students are considered less than welfare cases when it comes to medicare, compensation, pregnancy, eye glasses, nursing care, and practically all forms of medical attention.

Candidates are continually forced into courses supposedly to meet the demands of the labour market which no one really knows, least of all, manpower officials.

Do not forget, Mr. Speaker, that this letter was written by an administrator of manpower retraining programs.

Students are forced off courses prior to completion because time has run out on them.

Alleged Failure of Employment Policies

Surely in 1970, we should be big enough to admit that skill training is secondary and only education for living is the essential ingredient for personal success. Our people need new goals, broader horizons, enriched attitudes, they need to stand taller and feel personal worth and success.

While we train welders, industry gears up for laser; electronics is constantly changing, and secondary skills become obsolete almost daily.

Anything dedicated legislators can do to improve social and economic conditions for so many needy Canadians is greatly appreciated by those of us at the grass roots.

I hope the minister will be impressed by how one of his own administrators feels at the grass-roots level. I should like to conclude by saying that the motion before the House today condemns the government for policies that push people out of jobs and into poverty and then close the door to any possible escape in the form of training them for the new service jobs that are essential in today's world. I hope the minister will open that door at least a crack before this debate is finished.

Mr. John Lundrigan (Gander-Twillingate):

Mr. Speaker, I suppose it might be in order to commence my remarks by making an observation that is only less serious than the terms of the motion itself, and that is that on a topic as important as the unemployment situation in Canada, which I would have thought was the most chronic problem facing the nation at this moment, there has been at times this afternoon less than a quorum in the House and at the present time there is barely a quorum. I feel hon. members should note this fact because it reflects what is perhaps a lack of concern among Members of Parliament from all parties for the serious problems in question. Indeed, this lack of concern continues from day to day.

I was disappointed that the Parliamentary Secretary to the Solicitor General (Mr. Caccia) saw fit to speak for 15 or 18 minutes and then quickly disappear. I was hoping to have an opportunity of reacting to his very pointed but narrow remarks in interpreting the motion before the House. The motion before us makes reference to the serious unemployment problem, the government's discriminatory and ineffective manpower policies and the destructive labour relations that exist in government departments.

The parliamentary secretary, the hon. member for Davenport, chose to speak almost solely about that part of the motion that referred to ineffective manpower policies. He made no mention of unemployment or the psychological depression that is taking place in the Canadian nation today. Listening to