

Adult Occupational Training Act

in a position to appeal a decision of the department. In many cases where a young person lives at home, he may need more than a person living away because of the financial circumstances of that family. Somewhere along the line there must be a way of setting up an appeal procedure so that a person can suggest, on the basis of certain facts, that he should receive thus and so in order to assist him to get into a training program.

Another example is the case of an individual who might not be able to get into a training program because he has not got the basic requirements, not having reached a certain educational level. That person may have a tremendous potential as a mechanic, as some kind of operator or in a specific skill. He is a natural, the type of flower born to blush unseen, but may never have had the opportunity to get a basic education. He should have the right to point out to the department that he has this potential. I am sure the minister has seen many of these people who have a tremendous potential or inherent capability which has never been developed through schooling, on-the-job training or anything like that. This type of person should not be restricted through a narrow interpretation of any manpower training program regulation. He should be able to appeal any such decision.

My third point involves the need for the minister to take a very close look at the integration, or lack of it, of the type of training received through manpower programs and the economic need. We have completed a graphic comparison between various training programs and the number of people in them as they correlate with unemployment. The minister understands what I am saying. There is a plus or positive correlation between the number of people in training programs on the one hand, and the level of unemployment on the other. During the winter months when unemployment reaches about 600,000 people, we have about 70,000 to 85,000 people in training programs. Perhaps the number reaches 100,000 at times. During the summer period, when the level of unemployment is substantially reduced, and I am not talking about seasonally adjusted but actual numbers, the number in training programs might drop to 25,000 or 30,000. I suggest there is a tendency for the government to offset the impact on employment statistics by engaging people in training programs. I do not think that is good enough. I have heard the minister say, and he has been quoted in this vein, that he does not believe a person should be put into a training program just to take him off the unemployment list.

I know of many people who have taken training programs year after year when there was no chance in the world that once they had completed the program they would find themselves in an occupation, trade or profession. This is a waste of money and a waste of time for the individual. I have heard people say, and this is a standing joke, that three years ago they took this program, last year they took a different program, they are taking a LIP program this summer and next winter they intend to take some kind of skill training program. This becomes a farce, and the people involved recognize it as such and laugh. They recognize it is a shifting of impact, and that it does not train the human resource muscle to fit our economy. The minister must look more closely at this aspect

[Mr. Lundrigan.]

and set up some kind of procedure to assist relevancy in respect of training programs and the needs of the country.

My final point, and I am glad to be able to make this before we adjourn because I know the hon. member for Cape Breton-The Sydneys (Mr. Muir) wants to elaborate on this, is that there is a significant number of Canadians who cannot take advantage of these programs or provincial educational programs because they have not reached the necessary level of education. They cannot get into universities, trade schools or upgrading schools, and they cannot take advantage of any type of training program because they have not reached a certain level of educational capability. This is usually the result of background circumstances and it bothers me to a great extent.

There are a great number of Canadians, mostly poor, many in rural areas, and particularly in Atlantic regions, who could become part of the labour force with proper training. There has to be some way to help these Canadians better themselves through training programs and I suggest they are not being reached today by our present manpower training programs.

I will conclude with that remark, as I know my colleague will want to elaborate on that point later on this afternoon.

At one o'clock the House took recess.

AFTER RECESS

The House resumed at 2 p.m.

• (1410)

Mr. John L. Skoberg (Moose Jaw): Mr. Speaker, I did not have the pleasure of knowing the former deputy minister of the Department of Manpower and Immigration, but I am familiar with the present deputy minister. He has had quite an introduction into the area of unemployment and manpower training through his close association with the Unemployment Insurance Commission, and thus has the necessary background that will assist him in breaking new ground in this department. Having experience with the type of situation which existed respecting the number of applications made to the Unemployment Insurance Commission will stand him in good stead in the work that he and his minister will be doing in introducing this new program.

Looking at this bill to amend the Adult Occupational Training Act we realize we could spend a lot of time on the various amendments that it proposes, and could go into the background of the problems that have arisen. We have seen some of them personally, and others have been brought to our attention. But this being a Friday, it is really not the day to do that. There is also the fact that some amendments proposed in the bill are ones with which we agree, particularly the one reducing the time period from three years to one year, which was recommended years ago by our party when the original statute was introduced.

Our main area of concern does not lie with how the amendments will be applied, but rather with the question