

assisting women who wish to re-enter the labour force after having performed a very valuable function in society at home.

With regard to occupational segregation by sex in Manpower training courses, this could not be ascribed to wilful discrimination by the department. There must be reasons of an educational nature or of a practical nature. However, if the hon. member wishes us to investigate whether there are ways to improve the training courses she has in mind, and the possibility of offering other types of courses to women trainees, we will be glad to do so. But basically, when on May 14 the hon. member inquired why so many more men are judged to be helped by training courses than women, the answer is that it is because there are many more men who apply at Canada Manpower centres for assistance and training courses. Approximately 67 per cent of all those who apply at Canada Manpower centres are men, compared with 33 per cent who are women.

This alone gives an indication of the greater utilization of Manpower centres by men. From this follows the fact that the number of men referred for training represents 74.5 per cent, compared with 25.5 per cent for women. Again, this is a reflection of the clientele breakdown between men and women. The present figure of 25.5 per cent is an improvement over the figure of 22.7 per cent in 1968-69.

Mr. Deputy Speaker: Order, please. I regret to interrupt the parliamentary secretary, but his time has expired.

[Translation]

INQUIRY OF THE MINISTRY

Mr. Henry Latulippe (Compton): Mr. Speaker, as reported on page 5856 of *Hansard* for May 17, 1971, I asked the Acting Prime Minister the following question:

Considering the lack of balance of our economy, could the minister who has a great experience and knowledge of economic matters tell us if we are at the beginning of a new period of economic expansion or if we are faced with an outlook of unduly long economic decline?

Mr. Speaker, we have an unbalanced economy and the people of Canada, especially businessmen, are disoriented. They do not know any more what they are heading for. Every time I meet businessmen, they ask me: Do you know where we are going? Do you know whether we shall experience a new economic start, or whether this will keep on? We are ready to give up, we cannot carry on anymore. We are overburdened with taxes of all kinds and we have to support workers, pay them unemployment insurance benefits, provide them with pension schemes.

The manufacturer and the businessman who employ workers are forced to pay for all these things, beside health insurance for these people. This is terribly costly and boosts production costs. Their production costs must decrease.

I know some industrialists who sell their production at less than 15 years ago and who have to assume those tax

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increases and the various charges imposed by our economic system, in order to provide their employees with some guarantees. This increases production costs. We must reduce production costs on account of the mad competition prevailing on the market place. In such circumstances, several manufacturers went bankrupt and gave up, and we are aware of several others who are on the brink of quitting, because they can no longer make it. Therefore, they want to know whether there is any hope. They get in touch with administrators to find out whether they should give up tomorrow, lay down their arms or stand fast a bit longer. For the layman, I for one, it is rather difficult to provide a reply, because we do not hold the reins of administration, and we see the government carry on while debts, taxes and unemployment rates go up all over.

• (10:10 p.m.)

Some industrialists still believe in exports but if we export we must import for practically the same amount, so that does not change anything. Instead of selling Canadian products, we are selling Japanese products and that, on account of trade exchanges with other countries. Some intelligent manufacturers will say: What good are exports to us? Will the Minister of Trade and Commerce (Mr. Pepin) solve the problem through exports, now that we are in a bad position to export? As a matter of fact, our products are too expensive; labour and the cost of living are too high. Salary raises in keeping with the rise in the cost of living, affect production costs. Therefore we cannot compete with industrialists in other countries because our prices are too high.

How can we solve that problem?

That is one of the reasons why I asked that rather general question, to which nobody replied. That is the reason why I am asking it again tonight and I am asking the Parliamentary Secretary to the minister what kind of a solution he could suggest that the citizens could find bearable.

Should we let them nurse some faint hope by saying that the economy will start up again, that the problems will be solved and that they will be able to keep on operating their firm? The current trend is toward centralization and private firms disappear at an alarming rate.

Industrialists are leaving the private sector with much difficulty. It is hard on them. Centralization is more and more necessary and private firms are disappearing even though—and there is supporting evidence—they can certainly produce at a cheaper cost than the public sector.

Never will a state enterprise produce as cheaply as the private sector. Many Quebec people—I do not travel much in the other provinces—are against centralization because it does not solve the problem but only increases production costs.

And to create employment two or three workers will be needed instead of one. Where one man can now do the work, after everything becomes centralized three men will be needed to do the same amount of work.