

Business of Supply

broken down, province by province. Also, is there any provision under which needy students coming to the department for assistance will be given preference over students from wealthy families in seeking employment?

Mr. MacEachen: I do not have the statistics or the breakdown for our provinces, but I will try to obtain them. To reply to the hon. member's second question, C.M.C. does not conduct means tests to determine in any job placement whether a student comes from a needy or a wealthy family. We do not have instruments at our disposal. The suggestion has been made that in job referrals we ought to consider needy students first. It has been suggested that students coming from well to do or influential families find it easier to get jobs than those coming from poorer families. We have not considered in the department whether it would even be possible to take this factor into account.

Mr. Schreyer: Will the minister permit a question? He has just said that in his department there is no administrative machinery to conduct means tests and to determine whether students come from poor or wealthy families. Does the minister not agree that under the student loans program the administrative authority may determine whether a student is needy?

• (5:10 p.m.)

Mr. MacEachen: Yes, I agree this may be possible under the student loan program. This is one of the suggestions that has been made. A person, for example, with an obligation under a student loan might be given preference. We have this under consideration. It is a fact that it is some indication of need from a student point of view.

I want to say a few words about occupational training for adults. The federal manpower training program had in 1968-69 the best year in its history. In the fiscal year which is coming to a close the program enrolled some 430,000 adults, 301,000 of them on a full-time basis. Relating these enrolments to the population, the Canadian program, apart from the retraining program of Sweden, is the largest program of its kind in the world.

The program started from very modest beginnings only a few years ago. In 1961-62, under the federal Technical and Vocational Training Assistance Act, the program enrolled only 26,000 unemployed persons. The numbers of unemployed receiving training

have been growing steadily. In 1967-68, the first year of the occupational training for adults program, the enrolment of the unemployed rose to 196,000, and in the current fiscal year the program will serve some 246,000 unemployed workers. In addition, the program caters to many thousands of apprentices as well as employed workers taking full-time training in industry or part-time training in the evening.

The increased effort of the federal government in the development of our skilled manpower in the last few years is dramatically expressed in financial terms. In 1961-62 the federal government spent a mere \$18 million on all training programs combined, many of them catering to young people of school age. In the current year the federal government expects to spend \$197 million, all of it for the benefit of adult workers. This is 11 times as much as eight years ago.

I wanted to make this point because I think we ought to maintain a certain balance in the development of our manpower programs. There has to be a balance between the young people and the adult members of the labour force. We believe that this additional expenditure not only indicates that the proper emphasis is being given to the adult training course but that the money is being more effectively spent and is yielding even greater benefits than ever before. We tried to gear our training to the unemployment situation this winter. In January of this current year there were about 30,000 unemployed persons in training. That is rather good from my point of view.

Mr. Benjamin: May I ask the minister a question with regard to the retraining of unemployed? Are instructions or policy directives sent to the staff in the manpower offices regarding those who wish training for an occupation in which it is felt there are no job opportunities? Do they refuse to accept such applications?

Mr. MacEachen: We try to provide training for job opportunities. We do not see much point in spending a lot of money to train a person for a non-existing trade or occupation. We try to gear our training to job openings that are current or near-current.

The Leader of the Opposition made one or two comments. He referred to the manpower and immigration advisory council. I certainly think it was appropriate for him to mention the fact we have not yet appointed a general advisory council. Nor have we appointed the