

Supply—Manpower and Immigration

Mr. Woolliams: And that is quite ridiculous.

Mr. Starr: I ask the minister to look into this situation and to rescind this regulation or interpretation, if it be an interpretation.

I like to speak kindly of the minister. I have known him for a number of years. He has wide experience of labour conditions and he knows that for a youth to work in a modern, automated industry he must be able to read and write and follow written instructions proficiently.

I also ask the minister to find out why fewer and fewer people are, because of restrictions, being referred for training by manpower offices. Are we to take it that young Canadians now enter the labour market fully trained? Is that why the minister has not included our young people in this program? Or are we to take it that the labour force has finally caught up to automation? I cannot believe that; and I do not think the minister believes it either, especially if one scrutinizes carefully the statement he made earlier today.

The provinces have not found that our young people are qualified to cope with automation. In Ontario the need for training is greater than ever before, according to the authorities, and the parliamentary secretary to the minister knows this because he comes from a highly industrialized region of Ontario. Provincial authorities know that it is almost hopeless for any young person who is without qualifications to attempt to obtain a job in industry. The parliamentary secretary and the minister will agree with that statement. The minister, with his unrivaled experience in this field, will certainly agree with it. The department is fortunate to have at its head a minister who has such a sound grasp of labour conditions. It is fortunate to be headed by a minister who feels such sympathy for Canadian workers. Nevertheless, I ask him not to shirk his responsibilities to the young people of this country.

I ask him to look into the matters I have raised and to see whether there cannot be more referrals by his offices than at present. I am sure the declining number of referrals, does not conform to policy. Something must be wrong with the instructions or regulations and they ought to be amended. Second, to provide for a more flexible interpretation of training, subjects that are not directly part of the technical field ought to be provided for our young people when knowledge of those subjects is essential to enable them to hold

down a job. These subjects are not being taught under federal training provisions at present. It is important that they should be. Third, the minister should take steps to waive the three year waiting period. It is not working. It is causing hardship. This policy affects most strongly young people just out of school. They should be given an immediate opportunity for training. Hope of a place in the labour market and in society should not be denied them for three years before allowing them to qualify for training allowances. After all, Mr. Chairman, Canadians are putting up \$206 million for these programs and they are entitled to expect results.

In his opening statement the minister said that manpower services had been improved. I hope he is right. In many areas they needed improving. Manpower policies have caused a great deal of dissatisfaction throughout the provinces. The minister knows this because it has been brought to his attention. Confusion and uncertainty about policies are prevalent. As a matter of fact, there are no set goals. Huge sums, nevertheless, are spent without bringing desired results.

I suggest to the minister that in order to ease some of the uncertainty the whole question of training should be referred to a standing committee of the House of Commons. The entire policy ought to be looked into thoroughly. We should review completely the department's training programs. Many questions could be asked in order to clear the air. Witnesses from the provincial departments could be called and we could learn whether the department's policies are working as the provinces wish to see them work. We might learn whether the provinces are able to implement the policies and whether areas of need are being neglected. We ought to hear from labour representatives and from management. The whole subject should be aired. Questions should be asked. I wish to pose questions, and I am sure other hon. members participating in the debate would wish to do so.

With regard to this debate, I hope the minister will not wait until items are reached before answering questions. It will be beneficial to us all if at some point in this discussion he will answer some of the questions.

I wish to ask for a start: What is our program with respect to on-the-job training in designated areas? These are areas trying to entice new industries. Is there any provision whereby employees in those areas have the opportunity to be trained for jobs? Such jobs would be in those industries which have