

Oral Questions

because it has had no assistance from the federal Government to keep its operation open, one that serves several thousand Hamilton area older workers?

Hon. Barbara McDougall (Minister of Employment and Immigration): Mr. Speaker, I would be happy to attempt to explain the situation to the Hon. Member, because it is an important issue. Early this year the Hamilton—Wentworth Skills Training Advisory Committee determined that 40 per cent of the trainees in this college came from outside the community, and 50 per cent of the graduates found related employment beyond Hamilton—Wentworth.

There are identified by that group other priority training needs. The committee advised Mohawk College that it would be reducing its direct purchase requirement for this year. It recommended to the province that future training be supported under the apprenticeship program, and the province turned it down.

REQUEST FOR INCREASED FUNDING

Ms. Sheila Coppins (Hamilton East): Mr. Speaker, it may come as some surprise to the Minister that Hamilton serves as a focal point for the Niagara region and should be funded accordingly. It comes as no surprise to members of the Liberal Party who are fighting to keep that campus open.

I remind the Minister that it is the second largest centre for skills training in Ontario. The Minister knows that there is a desperate shortage of trained and skilled workers in the Province of Ontario. Yesterday I met with the board of governors and they are on the verge of closing what has been described by the former Minister as one of the stellar programs in Ontario.

Will the Minister consider increasing the funding which has been frozen over the last three years as a result of her Government's 32 per cent cutback in funds for job retraining across the country?

Hon. Barbara McDougall (Minister of Employment and Immigration): Mr. Speaker, first, there has not been a cutback in funds. As the Hon. Member knows, there has been a change in classification.

One of the things that the Canadian Jobs Strategy does is that it takes the advice of local advisory councils.

Ms. Coppins: No, it doesn't.

Mrs. McDougall: That is what we were advised. If the Hon. Member is so concerned about this, I would suggest that she talk to her provincial colleagues. The Province of Ontario turned them down for provincial assistance for post-secondary funds.

SUPPLY AND SERVICES

BRITISH COLUMBIA—FEDERAL PROCUREMENT CONTRACTS

Mr. Nelson A. Riis (Kamloops—Shuswap): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of Supply and Services. Would the Minister confirm that, while the West got the short end of the stick year after year under Liberal administrations, under the Conservative Government's administration would he not admit that in terms of the percentage of supply and services contracts that went to British Columbia suppliers, the actual percentage from 1985 went down in 1986, and went down again in 1987? In other words, under the Conservative Government the procurement pattern of Supply and Services got worse every year.

Hon. Otto Jelinek (Minister of Supply and Services): Mr. Speaker, I used to have a lot of respect for the Hon. Member, but because of the type of irresponsible statements that he has been making for the last six months he has not only lost respect from me, but also from his constituents. We will see it in the next election.

Mr. Broadbent: He didn't answer the question.

Mr. Speaker: The Hon. Minister may want to reply.

Mr. Jelinek: Mr. Speaker—

Ms. Coppins: Just ask the shoe workers in Oakville about respect.

Mr. Jelinek: Talking about irresponsibility, the big mouth from Hamilton East is at it again.

Mr. Axworthy: You are ducking the answer.

Mr. Speaker: I would ask Hon. Members to respect each other.

PERCENTAGE OF CONTRACTS

Mr. Nelson A. Riis (Kamloops—Shuswap): Mr. Speaker, in 1987 the population of British Columbia provided 11.4 per cent of the population of Canada, and British Columbia was receiving 4.1 per cent of Supply and Service contracts.

The Minister misled the House a few moments ago when he said that things were actually improving. I want to ask the Minister of Supply and Services to confirm that—and I request that he not go off on some other tangent—in 1985 the percentage of contracts under Supply and Services to British Columbia went down from 1984, it went down in 1985, it went down in 1986, and went down again in 1987.

Will the Minister simply rise and say that that is correct?

Mr. Axworthy: Because it is.

Hon. Otto Jelinek (Minister of Supply and Services): Mr. Speaker, I repeat what I said in answer to the question from the Hon. Member for Capilano. In terms of dollar value—