

college construction program which was 75 per cent financed by the federal Government.

Then we established the Department of Employment and Immigration, the Canada Manpower Training Program, the Canada Manpower Industrial Training Program, the Critical Trade Skills Training Program, and a series of federal programs designed precisely to meet the challenge of training ill-prepared workers who needed special attention.

In January 1982, the federal Government announced a National Training Program and, on August 2, 1982, Parliament adopted the National Training Act. The Liberal Federal Government then made training a priority, as evidenced by the fact that \$1.2 billion had been set aside for a manpower retraining fund. Those figures make it obvious that the Liberal Government's interest in that field was not new. But something new is the challenges we have to meet now. New challenges call for new solutions. When I say "new", I do not mean a \$120.9 million cut-back in the National Training Program, as the Conservative Government has done in the estimates tabled recently. Indeed, Mr. Speaker, this program is costing us . . . in my riding I took advantage of the National Training Program.

● (1710)

[English]

The skills growth fund which was part of the National Training Act has been cancelled by the Government. This program gave money to industry and to community colleges for new training facilities. I had occasion to work closely with the high-tech industry in this area. We submitted to the Government of the day, in 1983, a program which was approved for funding under the skills growth fund of the National Training Act. It provided \$1 million to the Kanata High-Technology Training Association for the purchase of a computer and \$1.5 million for courseware development. Of course this program was a success. I am sad to see today that such co-operation with the industry has been cancelled because of the cutbacks decreed by the Minister of Finance (Mr. Wilson) in the order of \$100 million. Indeed this makes it impossible the the skills growth fund to continue. That program has been cancelled.

[Translation]

Mr. Speaker, it seems to me that the time has come to create a kind of national manpower training institute as a federal entity bringing together the various training programs for improved coordination of them. Such an institute could become the perfect instrument enabling Canada to affect changes that are imposed upon us by the technological challenge. This federal institute could analyse the whole impact of the technological challenge on the Canadian economy, develop and implement better-adapted training programs, train managers and help us to meet the challenge of the century.

This national training institute could provide services to our young people who cannot find job opportunities as well as to

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scientists, and women who are affected by the training programs which, as clearly demonstrated today, are lacking in our communities. For instance, I became aware this week that there is in my own riding a community organization called "Comité coordonnateur en Alpha" which has decided to deal with the serious problem of illiteracy within the Ottawa-Vanier area, a problem which is becoming increasingly alarming because it is quite concealed, overlooked and wide-spread. As a matter of fact, the Ottawa-Vanier "Comité coordonnateur en Alpha" has submitted an application for a subsidy under the International Year of Youth program, and I hope the Minister of State in charge of this program will give a favourable response to this application from a group within my riding.

Mr. Speaker, I should like to conclude my remarks by saying that such a Canadian manpower training institute could generate interest within the provinces, provide the sense of purpose which we are all seeking in the area of education, and in the national interest, that there is a real need to encourage all individuals, organizations and levels of government concerned about this problem to work together and set up concrete and coordinated programs to help young Canadians train and prepare for the future.

Mr. Speaker, the training institute could work jointly with industry in providing on the job training, in helping industries modernize their production facilities, and in developing a robotics sector in Canada. God knows how much we need that! But mainly, a national training and manpower Institute could assume the leadership Canada needs to reorganize its manpower and economy. All participants at every level could benefit from its economic spin-offs, from its expertise. Finally, the Canadian economy, the labour market and the standard of living of Canadians would be better off.

Mr. Speaker, it is my hope that this motion will be supported by the House and that we can involve the Canadian Government, the provinces and the private sector, and implement for our Canadian workers a worthwhile program of manpower training and in-service training that is greatly needed.

● (1720)

[English]

Mr. Howard McCurdy (Windsor-Walkerville): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to have this opportunity to rise on a motion which, given the changes that are occurring which have been aptly described by the Hon. Member for Ottawa-Vanier (Mr. Gauthier), is one that ought to be given very careful consideration. I was interested in hearing the review of the industrial revolution which may be variously estimated as having taken decades to proceed or a century to proceed.

One of the dramatic changes which has occurred is that changes that took a century to occur previously now take a matter of decades. For example, it has been estimated that the amount of accumulated knowledge in the field of biology has doubled in a half decade. Therefore, we are dealing with a very