

I have one observation to make about the in-industry program concerning what I think will be the most serious response that the minister will receive from the provinces. Even though the minister might say that this is something of a motherhood bill and will receive, I anticipate, the approval of members of the House, it will generate a lot of response from the various provinces and there is one aspect that has to be considered when talking about in-industry training. Something that has bothered our party, and which ought to bother every member of the House, has been the continual emphasis in government programs during the last several years on the designation of special areas, from the regional economic expansion programs to this bill itself. The rural parts of the nation, the more unstructured parts as far as industry is concerned, have been unable to take advantage of government programs.

We had an example of this today in the minister's announcement of the extension of the local initiatives program. The Opportunities for Youth program is another example. These programs have a tendency to discriminate against those people far removed from the centre of industrial activity, those who are isolated in terms of rural communities, those who are—I hesitate to say out of touch, but those who are not as tuned in to government communications systems as others and therefore are not able to find a way of taking advantage of government programs.

One of the most serious gaps that I see in the in-industry training program is the lack of opportunity for those in the unstructured, unsophisticated communities of Canada to take advantage of the program. How can you expect those in the small towns of northern Ontario, where you have a high unemployment rate, to find their way into government on-the-job training programs? The same can be said of those in the Gaspé peninsula or along the north shore of Quebec, small towns where in the wintertime there are pockets of 50 per cent unemployment, or in Nova Scotia, a large part of New Brunswick, Prince Edward Island, the province I represent, the northern parts of the prairie provinces and many areas in inland British Columbia, areas where there is high unemployment. Areas of highest unemployment also have the least sophisticated business communities. Many businesses are very small operations employing half a dozen people. But that is the economic fibre of rural Canada.

Therefore, the minister must take great care to see that the benefits of this program do not flow only to those living in two or three regions of Canada which have very sophisticated and structured business operations. I think of Toronto and Montreal as examples. These areas have the capacity to take full advantage of the program, and so they should. Let them milk every nickel they can from the programs. But other communities in Canada, not just the rural communities comprising a handful of people, many middle sized towns and cities, will be unable to take advantage of the program.

The minister must ensure a fair amount of flexibility in deciding what constitutes on-the-job training. There must be detailed consultation with the provinces so that those provinces without the highly sophisticated business structures are nevertheless able to receive a per capita response under the program. I just draw that to the minis-

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ter's attention, reluctant as I am to agree to give him the power that he will have if the bill is approved to enter into an agreement with any group or employer. Rather than continue along these lines, I will use the next seven, eight or nine minutes to make three or four suggestions of a more general nature. Perhaps they can be incorporated into government programs of one sort or another.

• (1250)

The minister has already admitted that he regrets it has taken so long for the three year labour force requirement to be eliminated from this legislation. He has also admitted in committee that he agrees there is a limitation in manpower legislation which permits only 52 weeks of training under manpower training programs. I am aware of many examples of people reaching the end of their 52 week period, wanting another two, three or four weeks to complete their training programs, but their training period has been terminated. This has resulted in a panic situation. If my colleague the hon. member for Humber-St. George's-St. Barbe (Mr. Marshall) were here, he could give a graphic illustration of two cases of this kind which occurred in the past few years. Thanks to the co-operation of members of the department who are experts in this field, and perhaps I should not refer to the fact that I can see them before me, the problem has been resolved. I do not know whether other members have met with this same success in their areas.

These restrictions are incompatible with any educational foundation or manpower training scheme. There is no way you can expect to bring people into programs, expose them to 52 weeks of training and then bring down the guillotine. We must make sure this restriction is eliminated, and I appeal to the minister to have his officials begin immediately drafting legislation that will amend this stipulation or requirement. I have become aware of cases this year which are pitiful examples of how this regulation wreaks hardship on people. It is much like the previous three year requirement which resulted in people not being able to take basic training programs, even though the result of not doing so was being laid off from previous jobs.

I have not thought out my second recommendation clearly enough to make it specific, but there should be some group or body in the minister's department which has the power to hear appeals. Perhaps the minister will want to think about this, and I pass it along as a suggestion. I do not think specific regulations in respect of manpower training programs should be used as the final determination regarding a person receiving manpower training. In any field of education, manpower training or resource development, there must be a fair measure of flexibility. A Canadian constituent should have the right to challenge the decision of a manpower group or office as far as receiving training is concerned. He should have the right to challenge the decision in respect of allowances.

Today, the minister introduced a measure of flexibility when he said that people who live at home with their parents can, under this bill, receive a small allowance of \$20 per week. I think I am right in saying that. Up to now, such a person could not receive an allowance. Such a person should not only receive an allowance but should be