

*Supply*

I certainly agree with the intent of the motion and it gives me a great deal of pleasure to add a few words in support of it.

There are many areas that should be examined as we look to the wording of the motion. There is the educational part of it and there are a number of things that I could add to that educational part. There is also the re-training part. I would particularly like to add a few words on the re-training aspect of the motion today, particularly as it affects the Province of Saskatchewan from where I come and the rural and remote areas to which many people who live in my riding look to their future.

The Government in the last month has introduced Bill C-21, the unemployment insurance legislation, that we on this side of the House oppose vigorously. It is a motion which intends to change the direction of unemployment insurance in this country. One of the things addressed by this motion today is to redirect about \$800 million in funding from unemployment insurance premiums to the re-training elements of our educational and employment system. I object not so much to the fact that we are putting funding into re-training but rather that we are diverting funds from unemployment into re-training.

I am a great advocate of training programs in Canada. I believe the commitment of the Government to training and re-training is the sort of commitment that we need to enhance the future ability of people who live in the remoter parts of the country and to enhance the future ability of those who live in urban Canada where technology is rapidly changing the workforce.

I want to suggest very strongly that the Government looks at the way in which Canadians view the commitment this Government is making. Let me cite an example from the Province of Saskatchewan. The previous Government under former Premier Allan Blakeney put a training program into place for dental therapy which attracted a large number of young people from the Province of Saskatchewan. The training program for dental therapists eventually led to an entire dental program for school children. Dental chairs and offices were put into each and every public school throughout the province. We provided free dental check-ups and

basic cleaning of teeth for all children in the school system.

In 1982, shortly after the Government changed and the Conservative Government headed by the present Premier Grant Devine was in power, there was a redirection in thought. While 400 recently trained individuals were doing therapy and hygienic work on children's teeth, the new Premier removed the program entirely. He fired the 400 recently trained dental therapists and hygienists, pulled the dental chairs and equipment out of every room in every school in the province. Not only was there anger among parents who had benefited a great deal from having their children's teeth looked after but there was also anger among the people who had trusted the previous government to provide them with the training for what they expected to be long-term jobs.

• (1720)

After the announcement by the provincial government, the premier of the province came to my community of North Battleford and at a meeting of the dental therapists promised that every single one of those individuals who had lost their jobs as a result of the cancellation of the dental therapy program would get jobs in the private sector. Private dentists in the province would now have more children to look after and they would hire the dental therapists because after all they were so well trained.

That promise of guaranteed jobs for those dental hygienists and therapists in the Province of Saskatchewan has fallen dead. Only 6 of those 400 people who were trained by the Province of Saskatchewan for that program are now employed in private practice in the Province of Saskatchewan. That was the commitment, trust and respect that had been commanded by the government in the Province of Saskatchewan to the people in their retraining.

I have a great deal of skepticism about the commitment that the Government might be making and its good words about retraining programs and committing funds to training. It is all well and good to talk in grandiose terms about moving people from unemployment and welfare into jobs that will be created as a result of retraining efforts on behalf of the Government. In the Province of Saskatchewan, there is no trust from the people in the Government's moves toward that end.