

# Canada Weekly

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## New training legislation to provide skilled workers for Canada's future

A new \$1-billion program constituting a key element of the government's labour market strategy for the 1980s has been established as a result of the passing by Parliament of the National Training Act on July 7.

The Act, Bill C-115, represents a major overhaul of Canada's training system and allows the federal government to begin working with business, labour, community groups and the provincial governments to help meet Canada's need for skilled workers. The National Training Act has been designed to ensure that Canadian men and women are trained and retrained to fill an expected two million new jobs in the 1980s. The new legislation also addresses the needs of Canadian workers for job security, earning power and equity in employment opportunity.

"I believe we are now well on the way to establishing a training program that will stand as one of the most progressive in the world. This program is the result of co-operation and consultation of the past two years with many groups and individuals throughout Canada," said Employment and Immigration Minister Lloyd Axworthy.

The federal government's financial commitment to training this year is more than \$1 billion, the largest amount ever spent. More than 250 000 Canadians are expected to benefit from the training program this year.

Formulation of the new training act required substantial federal-provincial consultation. Because education is a provincial responsibility, key provisions of the Act cannot be put into effect until agreement on specific terms is reached between the federal government and each of the ten provinces and the two territories.

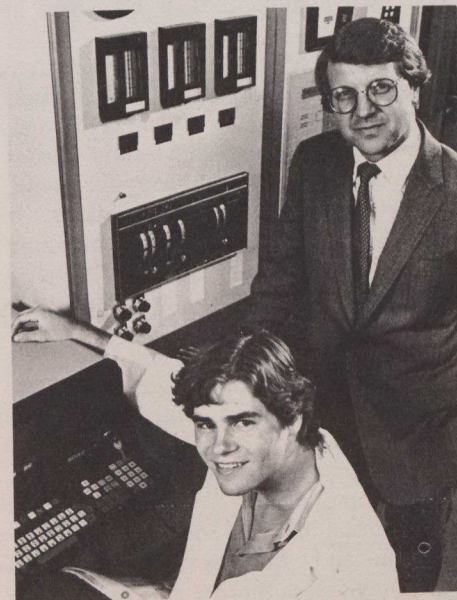
Training agreements between the federal and provincial governments under the previous training act, the AOT Act, were established first in 1967. Proposed new agreements under the new Act will replace existing ones that have been in

place, with extensions, since 1978.

As in the past they will outline details of the continuing co-operative effort in the training field to be exercised by the federal and provincial governments. The new agreements must take effect September 1 and will be applicable until March 31. They will cover the same general areas as previous agreements but will introduce one new major element — the Skills Growth Fund.

### Funding for facilities

The rationale for the fund is that existing supply channels and training facilities will not produce enough skilled technicians, technologists and tradespeople to meet the demand in the 1980s. The fund has been created to increase training in priority occupations by establishing, expanding and modernizing facilities for such training. In addition, the fund will provide the opportunity for people who are disadvantaged in the labour force to avail themselves, for the first time of new employment opportunities



Employment and Immigration Minister Lloyd Axworthy (right) and a trainee in the new field of high technology.



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