

Supply—Manpower and Immigration

trades so vitally necessary in this age of technology and automation can be acquired.

The minister knows very well that the percentage of jobs available to those persons who have no trade or skill is getting smaller and smaller. The day will come, as the minister himself has said, when everyone will require retraining at least two or maybe three times during a lifetime. This program should be accelerated. The government seems to have lost sight of the fact that there is a growing need for this program. I hope the minister will give this matter serious consideration.

In Ontario particularly the amount of assistance formerly available in respect of the construction of new facilities is not forthcoming now. Referrals by the manpower services have been cut in half in the last year. Nevertheless, unemployment has increased. It is noteworthy that as of September 30, 1966—these figures are available from the Ontario department of education—there had been 7,393 referrals for training by federal manpower offices and as of September 30 this year only 3,896 referrals, a drop of 50 per cent.

This area should be reviewed carefully. If the minister looks into it, he will find these figures are correct. The provincial government has the responsibility of the training curriculum. A 50 per cent drop between last year and this year in federal referrals is very serious. There should be an increase rather than a 50 per cent decrease. A drop of this nature in one year represents a very drastic phasing out of training in the province of Ontario particularly since future grants are based on the proportion of federal referrals. This situation is a cause of grave concern to provincial training officials. These people are wondering whether under this government training programs are being left high and dry.

Another cause for concern is the manner in which the three-year rule is being applied by the federal government. Under the three year rule persons cannot be referred for training until they have been out of school for three years. Then they qualify to receive federal training. This means there is no provision for training high school drop-outs, because they have not had three years in the labour force. I submit that this is precisely the area in which training is needed. It is directly related to the question which we as members of parliament are bound to deal with, whether the taxpayer is getting full value for the expenditure of \$206 million in

this particular field. I submit that if that group is being left out to which above all training should be made available, that is, the drop-outs, perhaps even the "hippie" group, then this program is not doing a good job.

Perhaps the minister feels that drop-outs should not be disturbed and should be allowed to go on collecting unemployment insurance if they have sufficient contributions rather than being asked to take training. Unfortunately, Mr. Chairman, there are a great number who are not qualified to receive unemployment insurance because of the lack of time spent in employment. They do not have contributions sufficient to qualify. The act was designed to help young people fresh on the labour market to get training so they can obtain useful and gainful employment.

Mr. Marchand: Perhaps the hon. member might permit an interruption. They can receive training. The only thing is that they cannot receive allowances.

Mr. Starr: That is right; that is what I am getting at. That is what this government is doing. They can receive training provided somebody else pays the allowance. The government is not taking this responsibility. That is where this government is falling down and shirking its responsibility to the young people of our country.

• (3:50 p.m.)

Mr. Woolliams: It is a form of blackmail.

Mr. Starr: I submit to the minister that if he has any interest in the young people of our country, in all fairness those who have dropped out of school and have not been in the labour force for the required three years are just as much his or his government's responsibility as the responsibility of the provinces. If he wishes to see our labour force fully trained in the future with the skills that are necessary in modern society, he must assume his responsibilities and give this entire question serious consideration. The three year provision ought to be eliminated.

There are reports from the provinces that the minister's department is being arbitrarily restrictive in its interpretation of "training". I ask the minister, how can young people deal with blueprints, instructions and other documents if they are not proficient in English or French? Being made proficient in either language is part of training. Yet such language courses have been outlawed in the form of assistance given by his department.

[Mr. Starr.]