

*The Address*

proven to be sensitive, stand on the whole issue of young people and job training?

**Mr. Discepolo:** Mr. Speaker, first of all, I think that our government has clearly stated its intention to review the entire subject of social programs, including job training.

As far as I am concerned, as the member for Vaudreuil, I think it is in the interest of all Quebecers and all Canadians to make sure that future programs are well structured and clearly meet the needs of the public in general.

It is also clear that our government did not take a stand against manpower training. What we said is that we were not prepared to sign the agreement immediately. We want to review the programs first, but I am fairly confident that the member will soon get the answer he was hoping for.

[English]

**Mr. John Williams (St. Albert):** Mr. Speaker, while the member talked about the envy of the world of our social programs it would seem to me that our social programs in many ways have been part of the destruction of the economic viability of this country. We are now \$500 billion in debt and I think it is past time that we took our social programs and re-evaluated them to ensure that they are focused only on those who are in need rather than those who have collected by virtue of being part of a specific group.

The hon. member also talked about the right or the relationship between study and work and one particular situation that was posed to me by a constituent a few weeks ago was that we seem to have a situation in our labour training in which we pay unemployment insurance to people who are in the apprenticeship training program while they attend school. This appears to be a good move yet we deny unemployment insurance to those who are going to university for a longer period of time.

The point being made to me was that here we have someone on a training program who has a guaranteed job because he is on a release from his employer who is entitled to pick up unemployment insurance. Someone going to university has to fight for a summer job in order that he may continue his studies.

It seems to me there is a vast divergence between the two attitudes toward the two different kinds of qualifications of study. I would think that university training has to be encouraged as much as possible. How do the hon. member and his government think we can ensure that money is available to enhance and motivate and pay for the education we so greatly need in this country?

**Mr. Discepolo:** Mr. Speaker, I could not agree more with the comments made by the hon. member. I think that when it comes to youth training programs and experience, it has always been my experience—having had in my other life a small computer business—that I was able to hire young students coming out of CEGEP, which is a pre-university entry program.

I must say that in hiring those young students I was able in my own humble way to give them the experience that is so lacking when one is trying to find permanent employment.

• (1225)

I think those kinds of programs are the initiatives that our minister, Lloyd Axworthy, is trying to put into place. What I am hearing from my two daughters who are in CEGEP is that once they graduate they cannot go anywhere. That is what our government has to do and what we have to respond to. Those are the needs of our youth. It is essentially this: "Give me the ability to get some experience and I will show what I can do as a youth". That is what I have done in my whole career and that is what I think we owe our youth.

[Translation]

**Mr. Gilbert Fillion (Chicoutimi):** Mr. Speaker, I would like to congratulate the two previous government speakers, the hon. members for Brant and for Vaudreuil, for their very pertinent comments on youth employment. These two hon. members told us that they were willing to take a lot of steps and participate in a lot of discussions to allow our young people to work, and I congratulate them on their position.

On the other hand, I thought that the hon. member for Vaudreuil gave a very evasive answer to the question posed by my Bloc Québécois colleague concerning the decentralization of job training in Quebec. His response gave me the impression that he was not ready to transfer all this responsibility to the Quebec government. We are perfectly aware that the people who know best what our young people need are those closest to them. As a teacher I can say that to offer our young people an interesting lifestyle and lasting employment, we must bring them closer to the decision centres, namely the schools, or to the government that is more attuned to their needs.

[English]

**Mr. Discepolo:** Once again, I think the important thing for the youth of today is to get the training that they so desperately need. I do not think it is really my job as a member of Parliament to decide who delivers that service. I think it is incumbent upon our government to make sure that it is delivered and done with the most efficient cost possible and that we respond to the aspirations of the youth of today. We should not get into another quasi-constitutional debate on who has jurisdiction over what.