

Government Orders

causes of why young people end up uneducated or undereducated, unemployed or underemployed and unable to integrate themselves into society at large and into the work force.

• (1710)

What we found in common with other similar projects across Ontario was that when we dealt with young people who met these criteria of less than grade 10 education, out of work at least six months, very little job experience to speak of, we were dealing with a large component, over 80 per cent of children who came from a history of sexual abuse.

Until we start addressing those fundamental issues of why our children leave school, why they never quite make it in society, we are not going to solve those problems.

I welcome this comprehensive review. I want to see us be more frugal with our money. I do not want to leave my three children a horrendous debt. Nor do I want to leave them a meaner, nastier society than I have enjoyed.

I welcome this reform. I hope it will do some positive things for a lot of Canadians.

Mr. Ted White (North Vancouver): Mr. Speaker, I would like to thank the hon. member for an interesting speech.

The member shows great concern for people caught in the poverty trap and that is exactly what all of us have a concern for here. I would like to ask the member a question. I wonder if the member is familiar with a program that has been running in New York state which has saved the taxpayers about \$21 million over the last few years while at the same time finding positions for people who have been on the welfare roles for a number of years.

The project involves a private company and it is involved in training with a different perspective. Instead of trying to teach new skills, and I do not deny there are times when these new skills are needed, what it does is search for and develop the skills that are already there, however basic they are.

Then it teaches how to search for a suitable job and it helps the person go to the interview and it does the follow up and eventually when the person is placed it does the follow up to make sure the person stays in the job.

After nine months of continuous employment the private company that did the training is paid about \$5,000 for having placed the person.

As I said earlier that has saved about \$21 million for the taxpayers over the last few years.

I would like to know if the member would agree that type of program could be useful in Canada, because about 85 per cent of the people placed are still in the same job after one year. It has a very high success rate.

This seems to be a way to save tax dollars while at the same time helping people get out of that welfare rut.

Mrs. Catterall: Mr. Speaker, I do not need to go to the United States to find examples of good employment programs and good training programs with equal success rates. I find them in my own community and I find them having been started by people in the community who understand our needs, who understand the resources of their community that they can bring to bear.

There is room for a mix of public and private sector involvement as we address these issues as there is in programs in Canada and in my own community. However, I think we need to be cautious of one thing. It is very easy to have a higher success rate in one program if one is very selective about who one chooses and if one chooses only those people who are going to succeed. There are some people who are a much greater challenge whom the private sector, being interested in making the greatest possible profit in the least possible time, might not choose to work with.

For instance, I mentioned young people with a history that has lead them to have fewer opportunities. I mentioned women, many of whom were married at a very young age, who became mothers at a very young age, became single parents at a very young age when their partner left them. Those women not only need specific training, development of skills they have, development of new skills, but they need to develop a whole new level of confidence in themselves and belief that they can make a difference in their own lives.

• (1715)

That does not lead to a lot of profits but it leads to a lot of opportunities.

[Translation]

Mr. René Canuel (Matapédia—Matane): Mr. Speaker, I have been listening to my hon. colleague. She is full of good intentions. It is true that there is a substantial wage differential between men and women. When you talk about youth issues, it also concerns me directly. Except that the hon. member said: "We want to do something, but we are not sure what". There are things you can do when you are in office.

In my riding, youth unemployment has reached 50 per cent, not 30 per cent but 50 per cent. In my riding, there are no universities. This means that we are continually experiencing a brain drain. And those who leave do not come back. You are very sensitive to that problem and you are full of good intentions, but the road to hell is paved with good intentions. So—

The Deputy Speaker: Your time is almost up. I will recognize the hon. parliamentary secretary.

Mrs. Catterall: Mr. Speaker, I am aware that some people, in some areas, are facing much more serious problems than my constituents.