

*Adult Occupational Training Act*

themselves are developing and to the purposes the provinces themselves have in mind. After all, Canada is a huge country and, to take one example, mobility within the Atlantic provinces is just as great a proposition as mobility within, say, Denmark or some of the smaller European countries which have adopted sophisticated manpower programs.

In conclusion, I wish to assure the House that I intend to make a much fuller statement on manpower next week when the opportunity is provided to me. I shall deal particularly with the relationship between manpower, the Unemployment Insurance Commission and labour. As I say, I intend to speak at greater length next week on the new views I have formed as to the way manpower should be going in the next five years in the light of, I hope, an emerging industrial policy for this country.

**Mr. Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre):** In what debate?

**Mr. Mackasey:** In the budget debate.

**Mr. Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre):** Are we going to hear from all of you?

**Mr. Mackasey:** You are going to hear from this person. I do not take up too much time in the House, and I hope I may have an opportunity during the debate I mentioned. If not, the estimates are not completed and we can go into the estimates a little more intensively than I have. To set a good example, perhaps, I have stuck very closely to the bill before us. I recommend to the House the amendments contained therein. At the same time, I emphasize that this should not be misconstrued as a major overhaul of a piece of legislation which needs a thorough revision in the near future.

**Mr. Nystrom:** Would the minister reply to a question?

**Mr. Deputy Speaker:** The Chair has, recognized the hon. member for Gander-Twillingate. If there is unanimous consent and the minister is prepared to receive a question, the hon. member may ask one. Is there such consent?

**Mr. Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre):** Agreed.

• (1240)

**Mr. Nystrom:** Mr. Speaker, I have a brief question. There has been some concern about the role of the farmer's wife, housewives on farms. Do they qualify for manpower training allowance under this act?

**Mr. Mackasey:** Mr. Speaker, I will answer that in my usual direct fashion by saying that when we get to the committee stage the whole question of women in the work force will, I am sure, be thoroughly discussed. Certainly, I know the hon. lady in the hon. member's party will want to ask some basic questions about the definition of one year training and whether or not work done in the home by the farmer's wife, for example, could be defined accordingly by regulation. I shall be prepared to answer this in depth when we get to committee stage.

**Mr. John Lundrigan (Gander-Twillingate):** Mr. Speaker, first of all, I want to join with the minister in paying tribute to his former deputy. I know from personal experi-

[Mr. Mackasey.]

ence, having had a couple of years experience in this party working in manpower, that there are a number of officials in his department who deserve special commendation. I trust that as a result of having a new minister the morale of the department will begin to pick up, and that there will not be the continuous flow of restrictive memoranda that characterized the previous minister's involvement in the department.

I always get a little feeling of excitement when talking about anything to do with manpower, or human resource development, or even, if you want to tread on forbidden territory, educating people. The federal government has for the past several decades been very careful not to talk about education, since it falls within provincial jurisdiction. Nevertheless, anything to do with human resource development, manpower or education excites me. I am one of those who firmly feel that there is a positive correlation between human resource development and economic development. There have been thousands of studies, investigations and commissions over decades showing that in countries with a high level of skills and human resource development there is usually a high level of productivity and economic development. Therefore, I feel there is no way that we in this nation can go wrong by spending government funds in the area of resource development, provided this is properly allocated and controlled in order to get greatest benefit.

We welcome the recommendation contained in the bill regarding the three-year labour force requirement being removed. We welcome more flexibility in allocation of training allowances. The only thing that a lot of Canadians are wondering about is this. Why has it taken this government—and it is true of other governments as well—since 1967 to bring in such a very simple amendment that would give greater opportunity to our young people to find their way into training programs? Certainly, that is a question that has bothered me, and it bothers many Canadians that things that are so obvious right from the word go take a period of five years to reach the stage of legislative approval by this parliament.

The brevity of my remarks is in no way related to my feelings on this issue. May I simply say this is a positive move on the part of the government and will result in a fairer opportunity for young Canadians to find their way into manpower training programs.

The in-industry or the on-the-job training program to which the minister alluded, and for which we will now receive legislative approval, has not surprised me by its effectiveness. I am not at all surprised that it has worked out so well this winter. We feel that legislative approval for a continuation of the program will be of some benefit to a great number of Canadians, especially if the program is anticipatory. By that I mean that we do not wait until we get into a slump before taking action. The first to suffer in large industry which hits a slump are the people who are normally on training programs with the company involved. These are the first heads to fall. I think, speaking generally, the government should have a responsibility for anticipating where cutbacks will take place and to find programs that will complement industrial programs. In other words, I am talking about prevention rather than cure. I suggest the government take heed of this in future.