

*National Training Act*

the first 12-month period would amount to in excess of \$1 million. We cannot measure the human costs this would involve. When the decision to allow the Madawaska mine to close is made, the cost to government could easily exceed \$5 million in the first year, including costs associated with the mining sector employment bridging program.

The Minister of Employment and Immigration (Mr. Axworthy) should address the seriousness of plant closings, bankruptcies and the social implications involved before establishing a national training program which, if the current trend continues, will train workers for non-existent jobs. I do not see a national labour market; I see a regional labour market. The people in my riding wish to stay there and be employed, a request I believe to be not too unreasonable.

Job-training programs may be a popular quick-fix remedial notion, but they do not address the problem of job creation today. We must move to protect existing jobs.

I would like to quote from the general development agreement of 1974, in which the Department of Regional Economic Expansion was a partner with the province of Ontario, as follows:

—to improve the opportunity for productive employment and access to those opportunities and to sustain existing productive employment opportunity . . . in need of special measures.

The mechanisms we have in this country for moving workers in declining industries from one area to another are extremely poor at the best of times. The workers who are currently being hurt by this recession are those with less formal education and older persons who have the type of family responsibilities that inhibit movement. With interest rates the way they are, anyone with a house is neither able to sell his house in a declining area nor able to afford to buy a new one in a growing area. We do not have the structures to assist the mobility en masse of those who are unlikely or unable to move on their own to areas where there are jobs or national training programs such as this bill envisions.

I would like now to address the purpose of Bill C-115 as I see it. I see it as another power grab by the current federal government, this time trying to carve out a piece of the education market. Education is clearly within the responsibilities of the provincial governments. On the one hand the federal government is withdrawing transfer payments to the provinces for post-secondary education and, on the other hand, through legislation like Bill C-115 the bureaucrats are building a larger empire for the Minister of Employment and Immigration—or will it be the minister of employment, immigration and education?

I acknowledge that there are good intentions involved in job training programs, but it appears that the minister seeks to exploit the situation to expand his department. The provinces have a real worry that the funds for this program will be diverted from funds allocated to universities and community colleges. I am skeptical about moving people from region to region, first for training and then for jobs. It is impractical, and it is not feasible.

The Madawaska mine, which is in real danger of closing, is a uranium mine. The present government's involvement in the marketing of uranium is an issue which, along with concerns

respecting cartels and price fixing, lingers on in our minds. The people of Bancroft do not want to see the Uranium City solution applied to their community. The government is and should be responsible for its actions; I am sure foam insulation sufferers would agree with that.

The Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau) has indicated that co-operative federalism will no longer be practised. The federal government wants more recognition for federal funding and new areas for further patronage. How will it be decided which regions receive funding for job-training facilities? Will a committee be established and then its advice be ignored, as was done when choosing the architect for the new embassy in Washington? If the minister is truly prepared to listen to provincial proposals and allow a really effective training program to emerge through co-operative federalism, I support his efforts.

The task force on work for tomorrow indicates that there could be employment opportunities for machinists, tool and dye makers, welders, electronic technicians, computer specialists and a host of other occupations which could assume a role of national importance if there are shortages in these fields, but business activity is necessary before these jobs can be created.

The federal government has recently set two records: the dollar has reached an all-time low, and unemployment has reached an all-time high. I suggest that the federal government test the intent of Bill C-115 with specialized training development in the armed forces. This could be accomplished without disrupting any of the excellent training programs which currently exist in some provinces.

The minister speaks about a national training program to place a national focus on a national problem. The Department of Regional and Economic Expansion was intended to have the same purpose. It was created, and I quote, "to assist and encourage each region of Canada in realizing its economic and social potential".

• (1540)

The figures indicate that over the life of DREE, since it was first formed in 1969, one particular region, which has a tendency to support the Liberal Party, has benefited to the tune of \$1.524 billion compared to Ontario's \$277 million. Ontario has always been regarded as a "have" province. However, regional disparities exist in Ontario which should have been addressed by DREE. DREE is riddled with patronage to the point of being a national disgrace. It was a good idea; but it has been politically sabotaged to the point of ineffectiveness in certain partisan areas.

The \$350 million industry and labour adjustment program, ILAP, announced in 1981 also is a program that on paper sounds good. The reason it was established was, in part, as follows:

A program to promote industrial restructuring and labour adjustment . . . available to communities facing major lay-offs resulting from large-scale industrial dislocation.