

jobs created since 1984 have been created in the lowest categories of work. It is important to keep this fact in mind as we look at the second of those prongs, the Labour Force Development Strategy. This is the complement to Bill C-21.

The Minister has said, both within and without this House, that her Government will be trying to develop a training ethic. On the surface at least, there are those who certainly agree that the co-existence of labour shortages and high rates of unemployment underscores a deep-rooted structural problem that cannot simply be resolved with further economic growth.

The Canadian Federation of Independent Business, which the Minister is fond of quoting, says that 37 per cent of its members would hire additional employees to date if suitable workers were available. One would think that the Government would quickly and easily rise to that challenge. Yet, as we have noted, the Government is moving away from programs that provide long-term unemployed—those with few if any transferable skills—with the training opportunities and work experience activities that will help them fill those available jobs.

Instead, it prefers to invest more in further training of those people with proven employment skills. Those are the ones whose typical pretraining jobs earned them, on the average, better than \$450 per week. For which industries and for whose benefit then is the Government developing this labour market?

I will be kind, colleagues, and say that the Minister probably does not know, although she is not nearly so gentle in admonishing Canadian businesses for their low rate of participation in employee training relative to their U.S. counterparts.

An Hon. Member: Does she care?

Mr. Volpe: No. I doubt it. Even the CFIB, the Canadian Federation of Independent Business, begs to differ with the Minister on the question of training ethic. It claims that 70 per cent of small and medium-sized businesses employ 80 per cent of all Canadians. These businesses already provide on-the-job training of the type that has the greatest impact on productivity. Of all businesses, 40 per cent to 50 per cent already provided at least two to three weeks of formal short-term training. As an example I might cite Toronto's largest industrial employer. It is adjacent to my riding. It provides a

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three-week pre-work program to determine a person's employability before training begins. According to this firm, the skills required in today's factories are reliability, adaptability, and compatibility. This industrial employer joins the CFIB in slamming the Minister's training proposals as focusing "only on the tip of the training iceberg."

Clearly, the Government lacks credibility even among employers. Only one third of small and middle-sized businesses rate the service of the Canada Employment Centre offices as good. Little wonder. Small and medium-sized firms do not draw heavily on Government funding. While training policies of the Government focus on big business and big labour approaches, both are increasingly irrelevant because labour force growth is taking place almost exclusively in small and mid-sized firms.

If the Government were truly serious about its training objectives—and there is considerable doubt about its recent record as there is a 27 per cent reduction in training, a total of some \$700 million over the course of the last four years in training without so much as a "how-do-you-do"—surely the Minister would have targeted the areas or industries where she could point to anticipated growth and then proceed to develop the labour skills required.

Instead, as she points out that 50 per cent of new jobs in the next ten years will require five years of post-secondary education and/or training, her Government cuts transfer to the provinces for education by \$4 billion over the next six years. She casually ignores the provincial jurisdictions in a position to develop the strategies and programs to meet those needs.

She points to a national drop-out rate of some 30 to 35 per cent amongst high school students and an adult illiteracy rate of one in six. She dismisses this as a provincial problem and proceeds to then throw money at industries that will upgrade the skills of those already capable of working.

She looks at a failure rate of small business of approximately 50 per cent in the first five years of operation and forgets that a sound labour strategy might include financial support for business opportunity centres, like the York Business Opportunity Centre in my riding, whose programs are designed to ensure the