

someone working for seven weeks in the previous seven months cannot go back to work. If someone is coming back into the workforce, they are not allowed to go to work. A student just coming out of school has not been unemployed for 24 of the previous 30 weeks, according to the Minister's definition where you are registered with the manpower office and actively seeking work. A student is not actively seeking work because the student is a student. So when that person gets out of trade school or vocational school they do not qualify under the major part of this Government's so-called job development program.

Suppose you have a project starting in a community which involves some carpentry work. You have a young man or a woman who just came out of a vocational school or trade college trained as a carpenter. They need some work experience. That person is not allowed to be referred to this job development project. Why? Because that person went to a trades college and learned carpentry work. They were not actively looking for work. It is incredible when you look at it. The most discriminatory program ever announced by the federal Government was announced by this Minister.

The Minister spoke about social assistance in such glowing terms a moment ago. She is going to help people presently on social assistance to find employment. Everyone in this Chamber knows what has been going on over the past 10 or 20 years under the Canada Assistance Plan. We all know about the works programs of the provincial Governments across this country and what they do. In the case of Newfoundland, some \$24 million has been dedicated this year to putting those people presently on social assistance back to work. Unfortunately, they put them to work only for as long as it takes to qualify for unemployment insurance. The Hon. Member for Bonavista-Trinity-Conception (Mr. Johnson) knows exactly what I am talking about. He is perhaps the only person in the Chamber, apart from myself, who really knows what I am talking about.

Mr. Johnson: You are assuming you do, George.

Mr. Blackburn (Brant): That is a wild assumption.

Mr. Baker: The unfortunate part of what the Minister has announced is that there are rules and regulations governing those sorts of jobs as well. In other words, must have a dependant in order to get any of these jobs. If the Minister were to stand up and say no, that is not correct, we are going to remove the discrimination from the program and you do not need a dependant in order to go to work, she would then have to go to her office and withdraw the statement tomorrow because the provincial Governments would never agree with it. So we can see the discrimination built into all of these programs, yet the Minister says we are going to put people to work who are now on social assistance. That is quite a problem.

People on social assistance have been going on these work programs for years and years and years, training for jobs for years and years and years. Last year in the Newfoundland budget they were going to put 8,000 people to work under

social assistance, training them for jobs. This year it is 10,000. Do you know why? Because the 8,000 they put to work before have now run out of their unemployment insurance and they have to put them on another training program. So the numbers go up every single year.

● (1210)

This federal Government turns around and says, "Oh, we are going to spend \$100 million now under the Minister's department". Well, all that is doing is taking the money that would have normally been spent under the Canada Assistance Plan, which is 50-50, and putting it under this program, which again is 50-50, \$100 million. That is all it is, a direct transfer from the Canada Assistance Plan. The Minister is shaking her head.

I would like to read from the Budget as follows:

It is expected that this program will be successful in reducing the need for federal and provincial social assistance payments under the Canada Assistance Plan by similar amounts.

There it is. The Minister was not aware of that. Let me point out just one additional thing, and then perhaps I will get on to the Budget. The Minister and the Government are, of course, responsible for the insane program whereby they are trying to cut back on unemployment insurance, so they take pension income as earnings for unemployment insurance purposes.

An Hon. Member: Shameful.

Mr. Baker: An incredible scheme. To see somebody on veteran's allowance—I am glad the Minister of Veterans Affairs (Mr. Hees) is here in the Chamber today. I am sure the Minister for Veterans Affairs has written to the Minister of Employment and Immigration (Miss MacDonald) objecting to this, just like the Minister of Defence (Mr. Nielsen) did. I am sure that the Minister of Veterans Affairs has done that. In fact, I am positive he has done it. Of all of the people that this affects, the veterans of this country—Is the Minister saying the veterans are not? Who does the Minister think she is talking to now? This program covers all pensions for which work was done in getting the pension. In other words, if you served overseas and you are on a pension for serving during the war, it is affected by that measure. I know, because I have the cases.

A fellow phoned me up the other day. He said, "George, I am getting a one dollar cheque in the mail". I said, "What is that for?" "He said that is for unemployment insurance". "I am a veteran. I am 63 years of age and I just got a cheque for one dollar. I was supposed to get \$250, but I only got a one dollar cheque".

Mr. Rodriguez: It costs more to print the cheque.

Mr. Baker: Absolutely right, it costs twice as much to even print the cheque.

An Hon. Member: Last time he will go Tory.