

*National Training Act*

do not know what the proponents of women's rights feel about this point, I never thought, as a husband, that my wife had any obligation to pay for my education. I do not know what other hon. members feel about their wife's obligation to assist in their education, but it is a fact that the rules applying to student aid programs presume that a Canadian wife has an obligation to pay for the education of her husband. Who created that rule? Is that based on any Christian ethic or any other religious ethic? I suggest that it is an idea simply conjured up by a bureaucrat who then wrote it on a piece of paper. As a result, this individual who is trying to solve his employment problem by using his lost time to develop his own employment capacity in the face of a deepening recession is confronted with a rule that stops him in his tracks. He might as well continue on unemployment insurance and seek whatever work he can find. His ability to resolve his problem on a more permanent basis is stopped by a bureaucratic regulation that no one ever thought of applying to this situation.

That is the danger of legislation which is so general. We do not know how it will apply to different situations. That is the danger of legislation which defines "occupational" in such general terms that it can only be imagined how it will be applied to particular situations.

When we see bills such as this which simply define occupational training in such general terms and state the purpose of the legislation in such general terms and then apply regulations to put the real meat on this legislative frame, we need to have a lot of faith in the government. You have to trust the government when it presents legislation such as that. I have to ask hon. members how they can trust this government's legislative proposals at this point in our history? How can we trust a government which had come forward with a constitutional proposal which was rejected by the provinces and subsequently took unilateral action to force that proposal on the people of Canada without the consent and concurrence of the duly elected provincial governments? How can a government such as that be trusted? How can it be trusted when it indicated it will keep energy prices at low levels but then turns around to increase prices dramatically beyond levels which anyone ever considered fair and proper.

When we are being asked to consider legislation which does not specify its contents and remains so general in form, we are being asked to trust the government. I do not believe that anyone on this side of the House or, in fact, anyone in Canada has any reason to trust the government with this or any other bill. That is why we rise in the House to convey that message to the people of Canada. That is why we rise to say that while we embrace the principle of a national training program for occupational training, at the same time we want to warn Canadians that this may not be the answer. It may only be another government hoax. There may be no funds available to set up proper programs which will resolve the problems.

What is needed in Canada is a great effort to create jobs. The only way to accomplish that in areas such as Atlantic Canada is through the implementation of projects and the restoration of the faith and confidence of the private sector in

the economy of the region so as to allow them to do the job which they are capable of doing.

I would like to turn to other problems which exist in Atlantic Canada that necessitate such programs as the program for occupational training and other job-creation and training programs. It is evident in the very constitutional document which I spoke of that the government is prepared to declare war on regional disparity. The government said in its constitutional document that the Government of Canada as a matter of law was going to direct its energies toward an equalization program which will remove regional disparities.

I defy any member of the government to stand in the House and tell Canadians what the government has done since the enactment of the constitutional measure which was approved by the House in December of 1981 and officially enacted on April 17, 1982. What has the government done to remove regional disparity? I ask those hon. members to cite one piece of legislation it has introduced to implement the constitutional challenge to remove regional disparity.

Inaction is reflected again in this Bill C-115. There is no indication that funds will be directed to those areas which have the greatest need, particularly areas in Atlantic Canada where unemployment is the highest. It is an area where students graduating from high school, universities and other trade and educational institutions can find no employment. Student unemployment there is at the highest level in history. Students who rely on summer employment to provide themselves with the necessary funds to continue their education are unable to find any work. What will the government do about those situations? I believe this is the question which must be asked at any time when we consider legislation that purports to resolve any part of the unemployment or educational problem.

I repeat that we are asked to trust the government at the very time when the Minister of Employment and Immigration is coming before the House to ask it to approve a measure which will help people who are unemployed and seeking employment through the provision of educational programs. We must think of the actions taken by the Secretary of State (Mr. Regan) and the Minister of Finance (Mr. MacEachen) cutting back vast amounts of money from the funds available to the provinces for post-secondary education. These were vast amounts of money which provinces like Nova Scotia, New Brunswick and Prince Edward Island cannot provide and simply must receive from the federal authority. The only alternative is to cut programs or raise taxes. That is exactly what the government is doing. That adds to the difficulties faced by people in the maritimes and other parts of Atlantic Canada. They have a federal government which is continually cutting back on the funds available to assist them in the educational field. They are actually worse off in 1982, this very month of June, than they were a year or two years ago. At the same time, the Government of Canada, through the constitutional document, has declared war on regional disparity. So, Mr. Speaker, what can you say about a government that says, on the one hand, "We are moving toward equalization and we are declaring war on regional disparity," while, on