

*Unemployment Insurance Act*

a better chance to find work. These are two innovations which are very significant.

For older unemployed workers we have earmarked \$100 million for training. This reflects our labour market's increasing dependence on the human resources already in our work force.

Ours in Canada is a labour force in transition. The Government feels that it is essential to amend the Unemployment Insurance Act to reflect the realities of today's work patterns and to respond to the equity provisions of the Charter of Rights and Freedoms. These are important amendments because they recognize the need for greater equity and flexibility in our social programs.

Under this new strategy, 15 weeks of maternity benefits will be available during the period surrounding the birth of a child; 10 weeks of parental benefit will be available to natural and adoptive parents, either the mother or the father or shared between them. There will be fewer restrictions on women's ability to collect their entitlement of 15 weeks of sickness benefits.

The strategy proposes further equity measures. Claimants will have the flexibility to draw a combination of special benefits up to a maximum of 30 weeks. Claimants involved in labour disputes will be able to collect benefits, as will those who delay retirement past the age of 65. That is also a very significant development in today's world.

It is imperative that government programs reflect today's changing work patterns. In this regard, the labour force development strategy, as well as refocusing the Unemployment Insurance Program, will improve the training provided to employed as well as unemployed Canadians.

Under this strategy, \$230 million will be directed toward human resources planning and training. The following is how the money will be divided. Almost half of those funds will be spent on entry level training to be provided by the private sector where we are significantly deficient in our training requirements and training programs relative to our compatriots and neighbours in the United States.

Co-operative education funds will be quadrupled. Human resource planning will be made available to industries in order that they can plan for the future job market. The industrial adjustment service will have its funds doubled. As all Members of the House know, the industrial adjustment service has become an international model for dealing with labour market adjustment. The service works with management and workers in finding solutions to such problems as obsolete skills, the need for new technology, and major lay-offs. The labour force development strategy addresses long-term need for a labour force that will demand more highly skilled workers. By facilitating training by the private sector as well as expanding training to the unemployed, this Government will help improve the employment and re-employment opportunities of Atlantic Canadians. These new measures will supplement continuing programs that have proven viable across the country and especially in Atlantic Canada.

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Since 1986, the Canadian Jobs Strategy has provided funds for job training and work experience to those who are most in need: to women who want to work outside the home, to aboriginal people, to disabled persons, to the young and to unskilled workers. The recent employment figures are but one indication of the Government's commitment to helping this region prepare for tomorrow's labour force demands.

Clearly the labour force development strategy is following in the footsteps of programs which our Government has introduced in the past. It recognizes that assistance must be available for specific groups of people. It recognizes that specific skills and knowledge are needed. At the same time it incorporates the flexibility to allow regions and the private sector to use their initiative and energy to generate these skills and opportunities.

Four and a half years of experience by this Government has shown that this approach works in Atlantic Canada. It works because we have ensured that the training and job experience which participants receive is relevant to the modern workplace and will lead to meaningful long-term employment.

In closing, I would like to say that income support is at times important and necessary. But we must return to the principle that it is a temporary measure rather than a permanent remedy. Finally, the best income security is a job. The people of Atlantic Canada know this. They want to work and through economic growth and relevant