

Unemployment among Youth

of young people who have had projects and programs rejected. I suggest they have not fully understood the criteria. Other groups in other communities have had similar projects accepted. The frustration and anxiety caused by this type of activity on the part of the government can in many cases make these programs more destructive than useful.

The fact of the matter is that rural parts of Canada, particularly small communities, have received a great deal less benefit and less opportunity under these government programs. They have less opportunity to become involved in these activities. The hon. member also referred to the lack of opportunity for young people from poor families. It certainly is a fact that very few people from poor families really understand the power structure in order to take advantage of these types of programs. This situation certainly must undergo serious scrutiny.

We must give credit to the minister for his forward looking attitude in respect of manpower programs and for his introduction and passage of the bill which eliminated the three-year requirement of involvement in the labour force. There are many areas of our manpower programs that could be amended to help young people, and one is the 52-week maximum time for upgrading skills. An individual can go to an upgrading school, but after 52 weeks, regardless of whether he has completed his program, he is dumped out. That is one thing that ought to be changed in this type of manpower training program.

We must look as well at the idea of taking these young people from manpower training programs and somehow integrating them into the economy. There is no point in putting people into manpower programs, going through the expense of training them, and then dumping them into an economy in Canada in which there is no opportunity. In many cases, the government has been more interested in taking people off the unemployment rolls than it has been in creating job security. In other words, it has been devising welfare programs. A great deal more effort has to be made to integrate these training programs with the demand for trained workers in our economy. I hope the minister will tell us what he thinks about a five-year program in which industry can be involved in order that when these people complete training programs they can be placed in industry, finding a way from one stage of development to another.

I would say that our educators across the nation, even though education is sometimes thought to be purely a provincial matter, should reassess the type of education they are giving our young people.

• (1530)

I would like every Member of Parliament and every educator in Canada to read a book which has been a bestseller for the past six or seven months. The book is entitled "Future Shock". Perhaps every Member of Parliament has read it. There is a chapter in that book which is devoted to the theme that the educational system is directed more towards producing people geared to many aspects of society in centuries past rather than to people who would fit into the present system. I think everyone should read "Future Shock" to learn the way in which our educational system today produces people, even after 15

or 20 years in the system, who are not really qualified to fit into the society of the 1970's. I would like to say, as a teacher more than as a Member of Parliament, to educators across this country that they must start re-evaluating their educational process so that it will be relevant to the 70's. I submit that what we are providing our young people with today in the way of an education is irrelevant. It is completely out of tune with the 70's, let alone the 80's for which we should be planning. I will debate this with any educator in this country.

I have a couple more points I wish to cram into the 20 minutes allotted to me. My colleague, who speaks for our party in respect of the national health and welfare aspect of the federal government will be touching on this in more detail. However, there must be a re-adjustment of our attitude toward young people so far as welfare is concerned. If I may use the phrase "the adult world" to refer to people beyond age 25, that world refers to young people as being great recipients of welfare. If any one would read the very impressive argument put out by the Canadian Council on Social Development, it would be seen that there is not a preponderance of our young people on welfare. The figure is less than one per cent in the 14-25 year old group compared with in excess of two per cent in the group beyond that age. The fact of the matter is that we must change the attitude we have toward our young people who find themselves in trouble and need a little assistance under our social welfare schemes. If they need assistance they are just as entitled to it as is any adult in Canada.

We should make available to our young people opportunities which would make it possible for them to avoid the necessity of requesting assistance under social welfare programs. More importantly, I would like to see a long serious look taken at the Canada Assistance Plan. At the present moment, no province is entitled to adopt policies which would allow it to replace welfare schemes with work schemes. For example, if the province of Quebec desired to give its young people \$100 a month plus a few dollars from its own coffers rather than \$50 a month welfare, along with the \$50 a month which is available from Ottawa under the cost-sharing agreement, and put them productively to work, that province would not be entitled to do so because under this legislation the provinces which encourage people to work are refused the federal share under the Canada Assistance Plan. In other words, the federal government says that if a province wants to use the payments it receives under the Canada Assistance Plan to put people to work, those payments will be cut off. I believe that is grossly unfair. I think a more liberal attitude could be taken so that provinces which are capable of designing work schemes to productively employ young people would be able to use the federal share of welfare assistance for this purpose.

I have a final comment. I do not wish to dominate the discussion today because I know a dozen of my colleagues on both sides of the House who wish to become involved. In the past several days, I have watched a number of television programs covering various festivals. Last evening everybody saw on national television a program covering the festival held by the "Jesus Freaks". I am not very much aware of the motivation behind these festivals or the psychological motivation behind tens of thousands

[Mr. Lundrigan.]