

programs. Thus, Atlantic Canada, northern Ontario, northern Quebec and rural Quebec do not have access to some of the manpower programs which people living in urban centres have. As a result, many people who are in the target group will not benefit from this type of program, if the same type of job-creation strategy as used in the past is used now. I hope that the Minister will make sure that concern is brought to the attention of the Minister of Employment and Immigration.

I also hope that in the job-creation strategy a great deal of attention will be paid to the ability of municipal Governments to create jobs for which welfare recipients could well be targeted. That was not found under the previous programs of this year.

I hope that the Minister of National Health and Welfare will recall that there was an incentive program in which the private sector fueled the job-creation projects. I know that the Minister of Employment and Immigration has indicated the success which the program has met in certain parts of the country. I will not dispute the numbers here on the floor of the House of Commons. However, I will tell the Minister that that program was certainly a flop in other areas of the country. I am speaking of an area such as Sudbury, where there is a tremendous depression in the private sector. As a result of that economic depression in the private sector, we simply do not have private sector sponsors ready to go out and create jobs. In those areas of the country in which that economic fact is evident, municipal governments, boards of education—the public sector—were not allowed to get their projects up on the drawing boards to create those jobs for the people we are trying to target here. I hope that point will be brought to the attention of the Minister.

I ask the Minister of National Health and Welfare to take this matter one step further. He knows, as do all of us in this Chamber who have been in politics for any number of years, whether it is at the municipal, provincial or federal levels, that we recognize the problem of lifetime welfare. That is a problem which is not found in just one area of the country. Every one of us as Members of Parliament has these client groups within our constituencies. Therefore, what I am about to say has a great deal to do with what I hope this historic accord can do to aid one other situation which has been pointed out in the House in the last ten days.

As the Minister is aware, the Minister of Employment and Immigration was instrumental in the creation of this accord. A great many of the programs will be administered by her Department with money which will come out of the budget of the Department of National Health and Welfare. I would like to use Sudbury as an example to illustrate my point. Ten months ago, the Minister of Employment and Immigration introduced rule changes to the Unemployment Insurance Act which would, as of January 1, 1986, count severance payments and pension payments as part of the entitlement to unemployment insurance benefits. As a result of that, there will be fewer incentives for workers to take early retirement.

The Sudbury example brings home the truth. I can tell Hon. Members that in the City of Sudbury, this year, the municipal

welfare budget is the highest it has ever been in its history. Part of the reason for that will be compounded by the changes to the Unemployment Insurance Act. Now that there will be fewer incentives for those who are older to take an early retirement package, the unions and the companies will be left with no choice but to lay off the younger workers. This will affect people with 10 to 12 years of seniority who are around 40 years of age. These people will have to go on the unemployment rolls for the next year. At the end of the 52 weeks, unless some alternative job is created for them, their only alternative for living is to go on welfare.

It seems to me that, with the degree of co-operation exhibited by the provincial Governments and the federal Government which can bring forward this type of accord, surely the same type of co-operation and open-ended thinking can lead the Minister of National Health and Welfare to convince the Minister of Employment and Immigration to change the proposed uses of the UI funds. I say this without any desire to make political debating points on the floor. That type of change would place another 1,200 people on to the welfare rolls. If the intent of the accord is to reduce the number of people on welfare, I welcome it.

I point out to the Minister that there are other measures being taken by the Government which run counter to this type of accord. I hope he can convince his Cabinet colleague to undertake those necessary changes under the unemployment insurance rules so that we in Sudbury do not end up with more people on welfare. I use Sudbury as an example only because I represent that constituency and I know it well. I have colleagues on all sides of the House who have indicated to me that they have people who face the same situation in their ridings.

Last, but not least, I wish to indicate to the Minister that most of us in the political field welcome this type of accord which has been signed. I hope that in the coming days and months the implementation of the strategy will be successful in eliminating a number of people from the welfare rolls in each municipality across the country. I congratulate the Minister of National Health and Welfare for being part of this historic accord.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Ms. Margaret Mitchell (Vancouver East): Mr. Speaker, I would also like to commend the Minister of National Health and Welfare (Mr. Epp) on the intent and the changes which have been proposed in co-operation with the provinces to make training and job opportunities more accessible to persons who are on social assistance. Of course, it is essential that programs and policies be integrated in a far more flexible way so that people are not caught between the provincial, federal and territorial jurisdictions with little choice but to remain on welfare. We can think of many examples of how this has happened in the past. I would also mention the local jurisdictions when we speak about day care, which is also part of the needed program.