

*Oral Questions***IMMIGRATION****ENTREPRENEURIAL SKILLS OF IMMIGRANTS—INFORMATION ON GOVERNMENT AID PROGRAMS**

Mrs. Ursula Appolloni (York South-Weston): Madam Speaker, it is often said, and it is no less true for the frequency with which it is said, that this country has been built by immigrants. At the leading edge are new Canadian entrepreneurs, many of whom I have seen arriving in my own riding with savings in hand and plans in mind to establish business operations in this country.

A recently published report testifies to the initiative and enterprising spirit of these ethnic business owners, most of whom employ fewer than 20 employees and generate growth revenues of \$100,000 to \$500,000 per year. These are individuals who clearly have a valuable contribution to make to the Canadian economy and have chosen to make it, yet the study to which I have referred would indicate, and I have found it to be true from my own experience, that new Canadian business owners might well benefit by more familiarity with Government programs in place to assist them.

I would therefore recommend that the Government consider ways by which information on its assistance to small businesses might be made more accessible to new Canadian entrepreneurs.

ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

[English]

LABOUR CONDITIONS**LOSS OF CLERICAL AND SALES JOBS—NECESSITY FOR WOMEN'S RETRAINING PROGRAMS**

Hon. Flora MacDonald (Kingston and the Islands): Madam Speaker, in the absence of the Minister of Employment and Immigration I will direct my question to the Minister responsible for the status of women. It concerns the increasing number of women who, because of the depressed state of the economy, are being laid off jobs in the clerical and sales areas, the very areas where jobs are being transformed by the micro-chip revolution. These women cannot get into retraining programs to upgrade themselves for the jobs of the future because all of the retraining programs are full. In fact there are long waiting lists.

I would like to ask the Minister why the Government did not anticipate this urgent need and provide for more retraining programs. There are 2,400 such women unemployed in the Kingston area, and only 150 retraining places.

Hon. Judy Erola (Minister of State (Mines)): Madam Speaker, I hate to refute the figures brought forward by the Hon. Member for Kingston and the Islands, but the fact is that the unemployment figures for women have not risen substantially. That does not, of course, answer the question concerning

the plight of women in the country. However, let us get the facts straight.

I really do welcome this opportunity to respond to the Hon. Member for Kingston and the Islands, because the kind of examination which I have suggested is the kind which I would have thought the Hon. Member would have endorsed and urged. The role of women in the economy is one which I think requires a very close examination. I am frankly very disappointed that she has not endorsed that kind of examination and really examined the plight of the poor in this country, the women and the children.

Mr. Jarvis: They need jobs, and that is what they want.

Miss MacDonald: Since the Minister very casually denied the question or addressing herself to it, I can only consider that she is not concerned about the great number of women in clerical, stenographic and sales positions who are being laid off.

REDUCTION IN PROVISION OF RETRAINING PLACEMENTS

Hon. Flora MacDonald (Kingston and the Islands): Madam Speaker, unemployment is increasing. I would like to point out to the Minister that the bottom line is that the number of CEC retraining places in this country has gone down from last year. At this time last year there were 293,000 training places. This year there are 271,000, and yet unemployment has risen 50 per cent, in case she had not realized it. I would like to ask her why, when unemployment is approaching the two million mark, there should be fewer retraining places than there were at this time last year.

Hon. Judy Erola (Minister of State (Mines)): Madam Speaker, the budget is \$1 billion. I should like to point out to the Hon. Member, who has taken a very superficial approach to the problem concerning women in this country, that there is a fundamental problem which goes far deeper than retraining.

Mr. Nielsen: The Government.

Mrs. Erola: It is the absence of training in science and mathematics at the earlier level which prevents women from entering the retraining program.

I would suggest to the Hon. Member for Kingston and the Islands that she take a much more fundamental and realistic approach to the problems of women in this country.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Clark: You are a farce.

Miss MacDonald: I would hope that the Minister responsible for the Status of Women would only argue the case for women in Cabinet instead of ignoring it all the time.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Lewis: She has lost her status.