

*Business of Supply*

four advisory boards, the chairmen of which were to be members of the Canada Manpower and Immigration Council. Those advisory boards were on adult occupational training, adjustment of immigrants, co-ordination of rehabilitation services for disabled persons, and manpower and immigration research. When he introduced the bill and commended it to the House of Commons for support the then minister of manpower and immigration, who is the present Minister of Regional Economic Expansion, said:

• (3:50 p.m.)

The hon. members will note that the role of the council is in no way restricted or limited. Its job will consist in advising the minister on all matters pertaining to the efficient use and development of manpower resources in Canada, including immigrants and their integration into Canadian life.

I consider myself fortunate in that I can bank—and the same goes for the officials of the department—on the wise counsels of those Canadians who act outside the department. It will facilitate the drawing up of an efficient program to develop an ever greater awareness in management of the ceaseless transformations in manpower needs across the country.

Indeed, the former minister of manpower and immigration told the house that he regarded it as a matter of urgency that the bill establishing the Canadian Manpower and Immigration Council be enacted. The bill became law in 1967 but to date not one appointment has been made so far as we are aware. Last November 14, when the Minister of Manpower and Immigration (Mr. MacEachen) appeared before the standing committee of the house, the following exchange took place:

Mr. Caccia: In December 1967 the Canada Manpower and Immigration Council Act was given assent. Has the minister any intention of implementing that act by appointments to the various councils proposed in that act?

Mr. MacEachen: Yes, Mr. Chairman. We in the department have spent considerable time recently considering how best these councils could operate and be of maximum benefit to the department and to the country. I think we have it pretty clearly in our minds how we think they ought to operate. We have already canvassed major organizations in the country for suggestions as to possible persons to fill these council positions and we hope soon to be able to get it in operation. So we are getting ahead with it.

There is just no excuse for the delay in setting up this council. The concept of such a council is a good one. It would, as the former minister said:

—facilitate the drawing up of an efficient program to develop an even greater awareness in management in the essential transformation in manpower needs across the country.

[Mr. Stanfield.]

Such a council, if the minister ever gets around to appointing it, will help to involve concerned and interested people in all sectors of Canadian society. It would keep the minister, the department and the government in touch with developing needs and opportunities. In short, it would do something to improve communications between the department and the people of Canada. It is high time the government and the minister roused themselves from their lethargy and set about to implement this piece of legislation passed by the previous parliament in December, 1967. No public announcement has been made in this regard. In this day and age I am sure it will seem absurd to many Canadians and many hon. members, as it seems absurd to me, to have to say that on a subject as vital as this the policy-making apparatus in this country suffers from a lack of information.

No one disputes the importance of keeping qualified young Canadians in the educational stream. This, one would think, is something of a national priority. In this age of computerized information retrieval systems, can anyone in this house tolerate the statement put out under the name the Minister of Manpower and Immigration last December 9 in answer to a written question under the name of the hon. member for Winnipeg North? Allow me to refer to page 3647 of *Hansard*. It is clear that the minister said that the department keeps a record of their successes but not their failures. I quote:

A record of student placements was maintained separately from other placements of a temporary nature from July 25 to September 11, 1968. During this period 13,131 students were placed in employment.

The minister did not give any information as to how many students were unemployed. This is not proper statistical reporting. This is propaganda. I do not believe that the Minister of Manpower is really to blame in the sense that he instructed the department to maintain only sufficient statistical information to form a half truth, to maintain statistical information which for all practical policy-making purposes is useless to the government and the house. I do not believe that the Minister of Manpower contrived it that way. At least I prefer to think that he would not and did not. He does have constitutional responsibility as the minister responsible for that department. I tell him quite bluntly that if he has to knock some heads together in order to come up with valid statistical information he should do so without delay.