

*Anti-Inflation Policies*

**Mr. Osler:** On manpower retraining, which I think is the long term guts of this situation—

**Mr. Muir (Cape Breton-The Sydneys):** But you ain't got it.

**Mr. Osler:**—there is a similar trend. In 1969, 320,000 people were retrained. One can assume that a large degree of unemployment is caused by the fact that people do not happen to be sufficiently competent to take the sophisticated jobs that they are required to take today. It is nobody's fault, it just happens that people are required to do more exacting tasks in this changing age than they used to do. Last year, thanks to manpower training programs, 320,000 people were retrained.

In the Atlantic provinces \$55 per head of the labour force was spent and it diminishes to \$20 in British Columbia. But right across Canada between \$20 and \$55—that is the scale—was spent on manpower training per head of the labour force last year. One can argue that this is insufficient and one can demand that the government spend more. This is a perfectly legitimate demand; but do not say that the government is not trying, because it is simply not true.

Some 55 per cent of the trainees were unemployed when they started their training. About \$100,000 of the money that was spent was spent on those who were unemployed and living below the poverty line. About 43 per cent of the trainees had grade 8 or less education, and 22,000 had less than grade 6 education. How can one expect a man to gain a living wage if he has less than grade 6 education, unless he is a natural genius and there are not too many of them?

So manpower retraining is on the right track. This year the government will spend \$273 million to train adult workers.

**Mr. Speaker:** Order, please. I regret to interrupt the hon. member but it appears that his time has expired. He can only continue with unanimous agreement.

**Mr. Muir (Cape Breton-The Sydneys):** I rise on a point of order, Mr. Speaker. I think this great dissertation should be continued. I am sure we all agree on that. Maybe the hon. member will say something shortly.

**Mr. Speaker:** Order, please. The hon. member appears to have some kind of agreement which will allow him to continue beyond his allotted time.

[Mr. Muir (Cape Breton-The Sydneys).]

**Some hon. Members:** Agreed.

• (5:20 p.m.)

**Mr. Osler:** Thank you, Mr. Speaker, and I thank hon. members for allowing me to continue. I shall be only a moment. Eighty per cent of the 8,000 students who were retrained under manpower retraining courses last year, and whose progress was followed, obtained jobs within three months after completing their courses, as against 41 per cent of the people who had not taken the course. The income of the retrained people had increased by approximately \$55 a month within that three month period. So, I would say that the government is not being cynical and not being indifferent.

**An hon. Member:** It is being incompetent.

**Mr. Osler:** Being composed of human beings, any government may make mistakes. Any government does some things which are wrong. I have lived through times when governments that were not Liberal governed, and the country managed to survive. So, you cannot say this government is arrogant, callous, indifferent and does not give a damn.

**An hon. Member:** Oh, no?

**Mr. Osler:** Anyone would be stupid to say so. For heaven's sake, how does any politician hope to be re-elected if he makes no effort to help people and do things for people? The hon. member's arguments are specious and I was disappointed that they were the best arguments that could be raised on an allotted opposition day.

Manpower retraining is doing a good job. It ought to be accelerated; it may well have to be re-evaluated, changed and if possible made better. The government's regional economic program is only just beginning to roll in high gear and is only starting to have a meaningful effect. It will be some time before we can be sure we are on the right track this time.

**Mr. Muir (Cape Breton-The Sydneys):** In the meantime, we are starving to death.

**Mr. Osler:** We hope the program will bring about the desired results. Regional economic development must continue; there must be greater accent on regional economic expansion. Perhaps, since I come from a region that is relatively unfortunate when compared with certain areas of the central and western provinces, I may be excused for saying that perhaps we ought to look at the power structure itself. Perhaps we ought to look at constitu-