

Private Members' Business

Anyone who is familiar with the programs of Employment and Immigration Canada knows that these programs are designed precisely to stimulate local involvement and initiative. The Canadian Jobs Strategy introduced four years ago represents a fundamental break with the Liberals piecemeal Ottawa-controlled approach to meeting local needs.

The 1989-90 budget of the Canadian Jobs Strategy is \$1.77 billion. It covers a range of activities to enhance the skills and employment of several hundred thousand Canadians a year.

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The new Labour Force Development Strategy, the government's response to evolving skill demands and increased global competitive pressures, builds on the same base as the Canadian Jobs Strategy.

Passage of the current legislation before Parliament would make an additional \$800 million available for training, as well as such active measures as mobility and entrepreneurship.

We have placed the management of our programs very much in the hands of the people in the community. By turning the decision-making and budgetary reins over to those most affected at the point of contact the Canadian Jobs Strategy has ensured that its programs operate with the maximum impact and cost-effectiveness.

The government has adopted a realistic, workable approach based on programs with the flexibility to vary as local needs vary. Whether it is the closing of a vital plant, the sudden need for employee skill upgrading, or the relentless market change for products no longer in demand, the Canadian Jobs Strategy provides a framework for people in the community to apply their insight, initiative and imagination to deal with the challenges at hand.

Local planning by local people working together is the approach, and the important co-ordinating element of this approach has been the participation of local advisory councils. These councils include representatives from business, labour, government, educational institutions, and special interest groups. Local advisory councils familiar with their local labour markets provide advice so that local priorities can be synchronized with a range of

proven government programs available to help small communities.

A program that lends itself to local decision making is the Industrial Adjustment Service which has a renowned record for bringing employers and employees together to solve such problems as obsolete skills, the need for new technology, human resources planning, and possible lay-offs. The IAS signs about 500 new agreements a year. In the last year alone, more than 300,000 Canadians benefited from the Industrial Adjustment Service.

When an IAS agreement is signed, a local IAS committee comprised of equal representation from labour and management, immediately commits itself to solving identified human resources problems. IAS pays up to half the costs of the committee and provides technical advice, information about government programs, long-term planning and, if necessary, explores employment alternatives for threatened workers.

This approach has been so successful that the IAS has been copied by several other countries. The Labour Force Development Strategy announced by the minister in April, proposes to double the budget of this program to \$30 million.

I would also like to provide members with a brief description of some of the components under the Canadian Jobs Strategy which are at the disposal of local business and industry.

The Community Futures Program is another initiative that is operating effectively in every region. This \$134 million program is currently helping about 200 smaller rural communities across Canada. Community Futures assist people to develop their own answers to the unemployment and economic hardships which often occur in small remote communities and single industry towns. This program is flexible and responsive to input from those who live in and understand the area.

Community Futures incorporates four options. One of them, business development centres, offers locally managed technical and advisory services to small business and developmental loans up to \$75,000.

Within a more individual frame of reference, the self-employment incentives program provides \$180 a week for a year to help unemployed persons to start their own business.