

Social and Economic Security

might have to withdraw other programs not politically palatable to the Canadian people. We are willing to spend \$15 million because we are married to that kind of concept." That was beautiful figureskating; the minister should be complimented on his presentation.

• (9:40 p.m.)

I expected the minister, having heard the criticisms contained in the Senate committee poverty report, to at least comment on the fact that it did not concentrate on ways in which we can improve our economy and put people to work. I expected the minister to make some reference to the ways in which the economy of this nation can be improved in order to take people off the welfare rolls. That is what I expected. That is what the Canadian people expected. Instead, he came in with his coached approach to the problem. He asked what the opposition believed should be done. He asked what the members of the Official Opposition, the Cr ditiste party and the New Democratic Party believe should be done. This is the approach of the Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau). Those in the front benches of the Liberal party have been well coached.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Lundrigan: I intend to say only a few words. I firmly believe it is a waste of time to state my point of view but I will do so anyway. When I rose to my feet this evening I was tempted to speak for only two or three minutes and then resume my seat. I was going to make the simple point that this debate was a waste of time because of the absence of the decision-making group of this country. I want to make two or three points which I hope will be communicated to those in the Department of Manpower who are responsible for dealing with the problem of poverty in Canada.

There is in operation in Canada a manpower training program. I believe every Canadian realizes that there is a positive correlation between the level of education, the level of training, the level of technical or professional competency in a country and the degree of its economic development. The government appropriately repeated programs which had been instituted by previous governments by passing the Adult Occupational Training Act in 1967 and introducing a manpower training program. Since that time, 1,134,000 Canadians have received instruction under this program. The cost in 1970-71 was \$460 million. A few weeks ago, on October 14, the Minister of Manpower and Immigration announced that a further \$35 million would be set aside for training adult Canadians who are unemployed, that \$20 million would be allocated with respect to on the job training, and \$15 million to upgrading skills so as to best qualify Canadians to find employment on the Canadian labour market.

I do not agree with all the observations made by the Senate committee on poverty or by the Economic Council, to the effect that these programs are of no value. I believe that this kind of training is an essential characteristic of a human resource development program. It does take people off the unemployment rolls, although it might be said to constitute a form of hidden unemployment. It does put money into the economy. Moreover, when a trained

labour force exists there is a greater opportunity for development to take place.

In Nova Scotia, for example, we do have the capability of training people, so there is a better chance that industry will locate in the province. These are benefits which are derived from the manpower training program. I do not believe that a training program can create jobs; and, of course, neither does any Canadian. I do not believe the Prime Minister's statement that unemployment is a structural problem, that a great many opportunities are wide open but that people are either too lazy to work or do not fit into the openings which exist. I do not believe that, because from the research we have done the facts are to the contrary. In Canada today there are many tens of thousands of professionally trained and highly-skilled people who are unable to find work because there is broad and massive unemployment.

I believe we should reassess the manpower retraining programs because very often they are not able to take unskilled Canadian workers and expose them to training sufficiently to bring them up to the standards of skill required to enable them to fit into the labour market. People who are being trained either at upgrading centres or adult education classes are often not as competent, even after several years, as a young person who has just graduated from high school and who is also unemployed. We are spending money to educate people who find themselves, at the end, in the same boat as a young person who is unemployed.

Despite the large sums spent on these programs—\$460 million in 1970-71—we have only been able to influence, on the average, 5 per cent of the unemployed in the country. Last year approximately 100,000 people were affected by upgrading schools, basic training schools and other aspects of the program. There has been a terrible lack of co-ordination between these programs and the needs of the economic community. We have trained people in all kinds of basic skills, but they find they have no opportunity to use them because it turned out there was a flux of persons of that kind before the program even began.

I now wish to make two or three recommendations. I know it is a waste of time. I know it is a lost cause. I know they will never be heard of again. It will be written up in *Hansard* and a waste of the taxpayers' dollars even to print it.

An hon. Member: Agreed.

Mr. Lundrigan: First, I think we have to identify the components of the labour force in Canada. In one province there are 5,000 adult Canadians who have never been to school. Of what value is any kind of upgrading training to that kind of Canadian? Does this not suggest that we ought to look at other methods of bringing such people into the labour force? Again, there has to be a way of relating present programs to social institutions, to welfare programs and to unemployment insurance benefits.

Today—and this is hard to believe—if a young person is qualified to receive unemployment insurance benefits and finds himself out of work and decides he will enter a technical school or a university to improve his qualifications, he is denied unemployment insurance benefits because of the fact that he is not available for work if