

Senator Norrie: I just used my temper.

Senator Yuzyk: And charm.

Mr. Meyer: Are you by any chance talking about an electronics course?

Senator Norrie: No. This man was a farmer. He was afraid he would become incapable in his later years, when he was about 50, because he had a bad back. He wanted to be retrained in finishing furniture. He was put into a cabinet making course, which was quite wrong. They would not listen to me. The man did not get a good instructor. The next year I tried to get him into upholstery, but it was nearly a year before they could get him adjusted. When I eventually dealt with the right person, the matter was dealt with immediately. Previously I had been dealing with people who were just not efficient. When I got to the right people I had no problem at all. This is what makes one so annoyed.

I know there is a problem with people taking several courses and just making a point of taking course after course, trying to keep themselves fed in that way, but it seems that they are not very well counselled. A man such as the one I have been referring to should not have to fight his way so much. He is a fine person, and competent too. I was told by different places that a man could not take any more than one course. I was told that myself, so this was no fairy tale. It was only when I got to Ottawa and spoke to one of the ministers that I was told one could insist on a course, and then I started to fight.

Mr. Meyer: I cannot comment on a specific case, because I do not know the details. As to the principle, as I mentioned before, the only legislative limitation is the 52 weeks on the duration of a course. The limitation on the number of courses is a matter of policy, in a sense. Quite frequently a person receives at least two courses, in that he receives educational up-grading to enable him to enter the skill course in the first place. Less frequently a person will have received two skill courses in succession. That is why I asked about the electronics course, because this is one area in which there are two tandem courses required in order to achieve reasonable employability. This is quite acceptable. Unfortunately, there are over 5,000 counsellors out in the field, and from time to time they may be inclined to make a decision or judgment which could be questioned.

Senator Norrie: My point is that this man could not fight his own battle; he had to get somebody else to fight his battle for him. This is what makes me somewhat annoyed. Why cannot they accept a person on his own qualifications and work it out by themselves? Why should I have to intervene and push the point?

Mr. Meyer: He could have insisted on seeing the CMC manager after he did not get satisfaction from the counsellor.

Senator Norrie: They just pushed him aside.

Senator Bonnell: I realize this makes a change in the Adult Occupational Training Act. Certainly it gives training allowances for

a large number of adults. I am wondering about the definition of "adult" in the bill, which is:

a person whose age is at least one year greater than the regular school leaving age in the province in which he resides.

Is that the same age in all provinces of Canada?

Mr. Meyer: No, and it is not the same within certain provinces. Generally it is around age 16, but there is considerable variation in the detailed legislation on the point. We analyzed this two years ago in order to enable our field people to make the right judgments, and we found that even within provinces ministers of education had certain authority to bring it down as far as 14 years. For example, the school leaving age is 16 in Manitoba, but if the nearest school is more than 25 miles away, or something of that nature, they are excused at age 14. This makes it very difficult.

Senator Bonnell: You do not know the statistics of the ages in different provinces? It could be different ages in different parts of one province? Is that what you say?

Mr. Meyer: Yes, this could be the case. You would almost have to determine it person by person, depending on the special circumstances.

Senator Bonnell: We realize that at the present time the unemployment rate in Canada is going down, but there has been a comparatively high unemployment rate in Canada during the last year. Is there any contemplation by the Department of Manpower and Immigration to amalgamate the Unemployment Insurance and Manpower offices into one office, so that somebody who is unemployed can go to the next wicket and say, "Put me on training so I can get a job. I haven't any skills at the moment, but there are jobs available if I have a skill." There does not seem to be enough correlation or co-operation between Unemployment Insurance and Manpower. They seem to be separate and apart, whereas I think that when a man is unemployed he should be able to go to the very next wicket and see the Manpower officer to find out if he can be trained for a skill for which there is a demand, so that he can get a job. On many occasions when there is a high rate of unemployment in the country there are many jobs available, if the people were trained for them.

Mr. Meyer: From where I sit I can see that the relationship between the two services is actively being strengthened. To what extent they may become physically or otherwise integrated is something in the mind of our deputy minister, and perhaps his minister. I would not be able to comment on that.

Senator Macdonald: Was not what Senator Bonnell is suggesting the case some time ago, and then they were separated?

Senator Bonnell: They used to be very close, but then they seemed to be pulled apart. They should be pulled together, to get them very close.

Senator Macdonald: I think that is a matter of policy of the department.