

dian Jobs Strategy. Rather than making work, we set out to make permanent jobs.

This new approach focused on individual training needs. The Canadian Jobs Strategy also recognized that bureaucrats in Ottawa are not the people who should be determining local labour market needs. The Government brought in a flexible approach that recognized that the people who know best what is needed in a local economy are the people who live there.

Building on the philosophy and the success of the Canadian Jobs Strategy, last month the Minister of Employment and Immigration (Mrs. McDougall) introduced an important national program that will lead to further improvements in the training and employment structure of the Canadian labour market. The new labour force development strategy will enlist the involvement of business, labour and Government in a unique co-operative effort to address the skill demands of today's labour market. The new labour force development strategy will continue to help those most in need in Atlantic Canada today.

We are seeing in our part of the world the economy transform from resource-based to service and skill-based employment. This means that education and training are extremely important for the future of workers in the Atlantic region.

Given the pressures to mobilize all human resources in new directions, under this strategy we have proposed important reforms to the Unemployment Insurance Act. These changes will allow the unemployment insurance program to help Atlantic Canadians find productive and more permanent places in the work force.

Providing Atlantic Canadians with the old unemployment insurance system is not good enough any more. Action is needed to help workers get the training and skills that match today's business needs.

The Opposition has been too quick to criticize us for lengthening the qualifying periods for unemployment insurance. Yes, it is true that some unemployment insurance claimants will have to work longer to qualify for benefits and the duration of their benefits will be shorter in many cases. However, only in areas where there are more job opportunities will those conditions prevail. In areas of continuing high unemployment, including many places in Atlantic Canada, the number of

weeks of work needed to collect unemployment insurance will not change. In particular, self-employed workers in the fishing industry will not be affected. Seasonal workers will now benefit from the elimination of the repeater clause which previously forced them to find extra weeks of employment before qualifying for unemployment insurance benefits again.

This more flexible application of eligibility requirements, contrary to what our critics say, will not force unemployed workers to collect welfare. Past experience has shown that when entrance requirements have been increased, as happened during a Liberal Government in 1977, people actually adjusted successfully by either working the extra weeks necessary to qualify, or in many cases by finding permanent employment.

Atlantic Canadians are eager to work and to create prosperity in our region. Our Canadian Jobs Strategy under the new labour force program to extend the use of unemployment insurance funds for meaningful job training means that more Atlantic Canadians will have the skills needed for tomorrow's labour force.

For those people who are caught in the welfare trap, the labour force development strategy offers new alternatives. The federal Government is ready to commit an additional \$100 million to train social assistance recipients for satisfying, steady jobs. If the provinces agree to match this money, together we will have an additional \$200 million available to significantly improve employment prospects for 20,000 social assistance recipients across the country. This is in addition to \$600 million already available in an existing jointly funded program which has already had an encouraging success rate and which was started by the Government in 1986.

As well, \$350 million will be spent to provide job training under Section 26 of the Unemployment Insurance Act, formerly Section 39, allowing workers to collect unemployment insurance while they learn up-to-date skills. This represents a doubling of funds under Section 26.

Unemployment insurance claimants with viable business plans will also be able to defray some business start-up costs under the new strategy. Claimants will be able to receive their unemployment insurance benefits in a lump sum in order to move to an area where they have