

*Supply*

meet the demands of new occupations we had to modernize the training system in Canada. We cannot continue training people in old occupations, obsolescent jobs; we have to prepare them for the new world of work. We have to be able to work with community colleges, non-profit organizations and business groups to begin new training centres. In particular, we have openly invited women's groups and non-profit groups to start specialized training centres for women in those new occupational requirements. I have on my desk now a series of very useful proposals from the YWCA to establish new training programs for women in the new high-skill, high-tech trades. We have been able to open up right across this country, for example in the community colleges in the riding of the Hon. Member for Kingston and The Islands (Miss MacDonald), new areas of computer and machine technology which will increase the number of places available to men and women. But then we have gone beyond that and established reserve places for women in those occupations so that they will not have to compete, that they will in effect have an advantage to make sure that their previous disadvantages could be overcome.

The third step we have taken, Mr. Speaker, is to provide for special subsidies under the National Training Act, again to ensure that the employer of a woman in job training would receive up to a 75 per cent subsidy to help break down the barrier so that women who have not had the opportunity to be trained as a heavy duty mechanic, millwright or pipe fitter will get on the job training. We have been able to put close to 5,000 women in those training positions over the past two years. This will substantially change the scale of non-traditional training of women in those areas. Under the National Training Act we have tried to reorganize and reform the programs available for pre-trade and occupational training. Again we have something like 2,000 or 3,000 specialized places, 85 per cent of which are occupied by women who can receive the three or four-week sort of initial skills preparation so that they are in a position to chose which kind of new technical skills they would like to occupy.

What we are trying to do, Mr. Speaker, is to use this Act as the instrument by which we can shift the direction, focus and orientation of training, and open up new opportunities for women. We will do this partly by allowing them to be self-sufficient and establish their own training programs; partly by reserving places for them; and partly by providing fiscal incentives for employers, community colleges and others to break down the existing training barriers.

The third area I would like to address is that of job creation. Again, we recognize that it is important to provide for programs which would enable women to get first-time experience in the job market. Perhaps one of the most difficult and agonizing problems faced by women coming into the labour market is that first-time job, getting the track record to be able to demonstrate competence in certain fields. It is there that we have tried to refocus our job creation programs. We have a highly specialized Canada Community Services Program which provides direct employment grants to a large variety of

service agencies, partly to help the agencies directed toward women, such as abuse centres and day-care centres, but also to provide an avenue in which women can get that first-time employment. Close to 85 per cent of people employed in that program are women, and through the program we provided for first-time job experience in areas that are crucial.

• (1720)

As Hon. Members know, in the application forms for the Canada Community Development Project sponsors are required to list an affirmative action plan as part of their submission. The validity of the submission is judged upon the demonstrated ability or willingness of the sponsors to hire women. In the past, that particular facet of the program had been ignored or not properly utilized. We are now trying to reorient our job-creation programs in that direction.

Third, the special program for employment of the disadvantaged is working very well through providing direct employment incentives and subsidies. These will pay up to 85 per cent of the employment costs, to employers of women who have special problems. Immigrant women, first-time women workers or women who have been out of the work force for a long period of time are all eligible. We are trying to use that employment disadvantaged program as a vehicle to break down employment barriers and open up opportunities that did not exist previously.

We have put in place a number of initiatives and support, Mr. Speaker. Beyond that, we recognize that there are special categories of women who must cope with problems beyond the normal frustrations and anxieties of women. A good example is native women. Perhaps no group in our society is more deeply discriminated against than they are. We work very closely with the Canadian Native Women's Council and we support them in the development of a number of employment co-ordinators for native women across Canada. They are now working with employers, with native organizations and community organizations to try to find a special employment role for native women.

We also took notice of the fact that domestic workers—women brought in to provide a service function which Canadians in large part are not prepared to provide—are being discriminated against in a number of areas. We gave them the option of choosing to settle in Canada as part of the benefit they would receive because they are prepared to do a job that many Canadians do not want to do. The preliminary assessments of that program made by the organization representing domestic workers, shows that in large part it has been successful.

I want to point out that the Government is trying to initiate a number of proposals to provide employment opportunities for women and to break down barriers. In order to be totally successful we need the support of all Members of Parliament. It is important that they work with us in their constituencies to help make these programs effective. If we can work in partnership with the other major players in the economy, we will be