

sional occupations requiring university training. The ratings in the FOIL reports should reflect situations of persistent excess supply or demand expected to continue in the current program planning period, thus making it possible for corrective action to be taken. "The numeric output of COFOR can be utilized in background planning and the establishment of priorities. In a day-to-day program management sense, FOIL results can be utilized for fine tuning and update."<sup>3</sup> FOIL should therefore be of great assistance to the provincial Manpower Needs Committee.

It will not be possible to judge the accuracy of these forecasts for some time. It will be even longer before their effect on manpower training programs will be evident. To a large extent the advice provided in these forecasts rests on qualitative judgements provided primarily by the district economist, on his interpretation and synthesis of information about occupational shortages. The district economist reports directly to the regional economist and through him to the headquarters' Economics Analysis Group. He is responsible for identifying manpower needs for at least two years ahead by active observation of local conditions and comparison of local needs with national and provincial projections of need. In addition to providing data for FOIL projections of occupational demand, he must also forecast other operational variables based on a continual analysis of the economy of his local area with special emphasis on the labour market. These forecasts are also designed to help CMC managers set realistic operational targets.

Dr. Dupré told the Committee that in his experience the capacity of the district economist to gather intelligence as opposed to simple numbers is very limited. (16:14) In gathering this intelligence he runs into the ingrained reluctance of the employers to make their future plans known very long in advance as well as the ingrained reluctance of the CMC counsellor to generalize on particular experience. This is a situation which must affect the accuracy of the information on which the district economist bases his judgements.

There is an overall difficulty in relying on CMC counsellors to report data required not only for forecasts but for evaluation purposes. Mr. Campbell explained their attitude to the Committee.

Their orientation as individuals is very much towards trying to help the person and trying to fill the job. Their interest is in doing that job as well as they can. Their personal interest in statistics is very low. It is we who have the interest in statistics. (24:23)

But CMC counsellors do feel that they know what is required in their own local markets and that they should be consulted, particularly about training requirements. Mr. Campbell acknowledged that "forecasting has very little to do with individual counsellors." But he assured the Committee "although they may not realize it a great deal of information that counsellors produce in statistical form enters into forecasts." (24:25)

These considerations led the Committee to the view that in spite of the improvement in forecasting occupational demands through the development of

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<sup>3</sup> Ibid