

ment must draft a comprehensive training plan for Canada.

In conclusion, until it accepts that the future belongs to the country with the best trained and the most highly skilled work force and does something about that, Canada's future will be in peril.

I call on the government to do its job and provide us with a training master plan so that unemployed Canadians, young and old, can meet the challenges of tomorrow while addressing the reality of today.

Mr. Bill Kempling (Parliamentary Secretary to President of the Treasury Board and Minister of State (Finance)): Madam Speaker, on behalf of the Minister of Employment and Immigration I welcome the opportunity to provide additional information relating to the question raised by the member for York North on October 10 on the government's labour policies.

In 1989 the government introduced the Labour Force Development Strategy. Under that strategy the government has allocated \$3.1 billion this year and \$3.4 billion again in 1992 on training and adjustment programs for Canadian workers. That is more than \$6 billion in the first two years.

These funds have helped workers and their employers improve skills and maintain and create stable and long employment rather than make-work projects.

In his recent report on Canada Professor Michael Porter, an authority on competitiveness, noted that the recent federal government initiatives to devote more resources to training the unemployed are moving in the right direction. Furthermore, the creation of the Canadian Labour Force Development Board earlier this year is a model of the partnership that needs to be developed in Canada if Canada wishes to remain prosperous in an increasingly competitive world.

As part of the government's prosperity initiative, on October 29, 1991 the minister of science and technology and the Minister of Employment and Immigration released two discussion papers, one on competitiveness and the other on learning, which are intended to stimulate a national discussion on the factors which affect our current and future prosperity.

This national discussion will be co-ordinated by a private sector steering group on prosperity and will involve all interested Canadians.

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On the learning issues, the consultation will help identify gaps that may still exist in the area of human resource development and ways for all Canadians to address them co-operatively.

Past and current initiatives of this government demonstrate clearly the importance the government places on labour market policies to facilitate the adjustment process for Canadians and ensure a stronger and more competitive Canadian economy.

POVERTY

Mr. Ronald J. Duhamel (St. Boniface): Madam Speaker, on November 21 I stood in this House and raised a question with respect to child poverty.

There were two parts to that question. The first one dealt with the social assistance payments that certain families receive. I was particularly concerned about single parents, most of whom are women, and their children. The second part dealt with child care support payments.

Let us look at the situation. There are roughly five million poor in this country, over one million of whom are children, and that is a rate that has grown over time. This year there will be 1.8 million people fed in food banks in this country and roughly 40 per cent will be children. That is a deplorable statistic.

The National Council on Welfare said in its report, *Welfare Incomes*, that a Manitoba single parent, most often a mother with one child to raise, is earning 3 per cent less today than that parent was earning five years ago. That same parent with one child to raise is living \$9,000 below the poverty line. Can you imagine that? That is almost a salary in itself.

The government will say, and I can see it coming, that it spent more. Of course it spends more. There are more people who are poor. There are more people who are collecting. It will say that it increased certain payments. That does not take into account inflation. What help is that to that mother and those children?

I want to address the question of child support payments because it is one that was not at all responded to in my question. I was terribly disappointed. We know that these payment are inadequate. We know that they are paid late and sometimes not paid at all. We know that there is a default rate between 50 per cent and 85 per cent in this country. Those are people who do not pay or who pay late.