"ACTIVE" INCOME SUPPORT PROGRAMS

A CASE STUDY OF IMPROVING OUR ODDS AND CHOICES: COMPONENTS OF NCARP AND TAGS

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A Case study of Improving Our Odds and Choices: Components of NCARP and TAGS

by

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On July 2, 1992, in response to the commercial extinction of the Northern cod stock in zones 2J 3KL off the coast of Newfoundland, Canada, the Progressive Conservative Government of Brian Mulroney, announced a moratorium on that fishery. The moratorium initially displaced around 20,000 Newfoundlanders from the fishing industry. Subsequently, in 1993, other fisheries were closed displacing in all about 35,000 people from the fishing industry in Newfoundland. In a Federal Address on July 2, 1992, the magnitude of the moratorium was described by Fisheries Minister, John Crosbie:

> In terms of incomes and employment, while the fishery does not hold the commanding position it once did in our economy, it remains our most important primary industry. One Newfoundlander out of eleven is a fisherman or plant worker. The fishery generates six percent of the value of all the goods and services produced in the province. Just as important, hundreds of communities in Newfoundland and Labrador are dependent on the fishery (Government of Canada,DFO,July 2, 1992a).

Provincial Fisheries Minister, Walter Carter, responded to the moratorium announcement outlining the drastic implications of the federal decision:

> Today's announcement relative to the two-year moratorium for northern cod represents the most critical decision taken in the history of our province. Indeed, the implications and the impact of the moratorium represent one of the most significant public policy decisions taken in the history of Canada. The decision, both directly and indirectly, will have unprecedented implications, not only for the fishing industry but for every aspect of Newfoundland and Labrador society, not only in the immediate future but for decades to come (Government of Newfoundland,DFO,July 2,1992a).

In response to this crisis, and as a result of considerable political pressure, Mr. Crosbie implemented the Northern Cod Adjustment Recovery Program (NCARP). The NCARP program was announced as a two year emergency income support program combined with options primarily geared toward a fifty per cent reduction in the size of the fishery workforce.

Since its election in 1984 the Mulroney Government had been engaged in social policy reforms which had centred on a shift from so-called "passive" to "active" income support programs. Often loosely defined, active programming generally indicates that some form of activity must be performed in exchange for state benefits. Active programming encompasses a complex diversity of activities, ranging from adult basic education, career counselling, job search workshops to apprenticeship programs, sometimes labelled workfare or learnfare. The terms workfare and learnfare are often used interchangeably and imply some level of required activity in exchange for financial benefits. The NCARP program incorporated an active programming component with the aim of encouraging at least fifty percent of its clients to "adjust". "Adjustment" as defined by the federal government meant "...transferring plantworkers and fishers to gainful employment in other sectors" (Government of Canada,DFO, 1994i:59). As will be explained in chapter two, The Northern Cod Crisis: An overview, the downsizing of the inshore fishing

industry has been a long standing intention of the federal government and the moratorium was seen as an opportunity to advance this agenda (Overton, 1997:10). The adjustment training component of NCARP represented the Mulroney Government's conviction that income support policy must promote some level of active participation in order to eliminate the disincentives of passive policies. In keeping with the conservative ideology of the day, which asserted that the unemployed require incentives to work, financial incentives were offered in an effort to encourage participation in NCARP training programs (Fisheries News, October, 1992:7). Those who participated in training would receive $406 per week while those remaining `passive' would only receive $225 (Government of Canada,DFO,July 17,1992b). As explained by John Crosbie:

> ...there will be special funding for skills training for those now involved in the fishery, especially young persons who wish to acquire a skill or trade outside the fishery (Government of Canada,DFO,July 2,1992a).

In the Fall of 1993, the Mulroney Government was defeated by the Chretien Liberals. Since the stocks were not recovering at this point it was becoming clear that the moratorium would extend past the originally announced two year time frame. This knowledge, coupled with the fact that NCARP had failed to successfully promote adjustment, influenced the manner in which the replacement program, The Atlantic

Groundfish Strategy (TAGS) was designed. In addition, the Liberal Administration immediately announced that it was conducting a social policy review, with the view to moving from passive to active forms of income support policies. In keeping with these reform principles, active programming became a central feature of the TAGS program. TAGS counsellors were encouraged to persuade TAGS clients to formulate an "action plan" for the future, and were strongly encouraged to enrol in some form of adjustment training to meet their responsibility to the active component of the program. In a news release, on April 19, 1994, Lloyd Axworthy, Minister of Human Resources and Development (HRD), and Fisheries Minister, Brian Tobin, announced that TAGS, a $1.9 billion dollar initiative would replace NCARP on May 16, 1994. Axworthy stated that TAGS would respond to the public's calls for a new approach to social security:

> Human Resources wants to work closely with individuals to provide specific career planning and employment counselling. In a broader context, this initiative fits in with what I have been hearing Canadians say about social security reform -- that we need comprehensive, innovative approaches to employability and social security (Government of Canada,HRD,1994c).

Axworthy went on to say that "these measures are designed to help people help themselves". Emphasis was placed on "taking advantage of new opportunities" and encouraging displaced fishery workers to take responsibility for accessing these new

opportunities. This self-help philosophy was embodied in a motto that adorned TAGS literature: "If you fail to plan, You plan to fail" (Government of Canada,HRD,1995d). In essence it was being suggested that if the displaced workers were willing to help themselves, they would adjust, but if they lacked "achievement motivation"; which is basically the "persistence needed in order to reach some given standard of excellence" then they would fail (Abercrombie, 1988:2). The unrelenting message delivered to displaced fishery workers was simple; the key to their economic well being, as well as to the economic recovery of the province depends on their willingness to help themselves by retraining for new opportunities. Committed to the notion of active income support, Brian Tobin, Minister of Fisheries in the Liberal Chretien Government reiterated this message in 1994:

> the principle of passive assistance is not one that we want to repeat...We think there needs to be either an education or real training or work experience attached to a pay cheque... (Evening Telegram, Feb. 22, 1994:2).

The concept of active programming promoted by the Mulroney and Chretien Administrations was incorporated in the NCARP employment counselling program, Improving Our Odds (I.O.O.) delivered between January 1994, and June 1994, and in Choices, a TAGS employment counselling program delivered between March and May, 1995. This thesis examines the active

component of the NCARP and TAGS programs offered to displaced fishery workers as a result of a federal moratorium on the Northern cod stock in 1992, focusing on the I.O.O. and Choices programs in particular. It is argued that both the NCARP and TAGS programs are part of the federal experiments with social policy reform and show similarities with other active experiments.

Chapter two provides the context for exploring the active component of the NCARP and TAGS programs by outlining the evolution of the Federal social policy reform process. It will be demonstrated that the shift from passive to active income support policies was initiated during the Mulroney administration. This shift was embraced and extended by the Chretien Liberals and embodied in the 1995 legislation of the new Employment Insurance program as well as a number of provincial active experiments with social assistance programs. In addition, this chapter establishes the reform agenda of the federal government regarding social policy generally and as part of the New Right movement. As well it explains the importance of the shift from passive to active income support as a reflection of the position of the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD). Chapter three reviews provincial social assistance experiments that have incorporated the concept of active income support. This chapter attempts to define the concept of workfare, while

identifying the underlying rationale for it. It is shown that the rationale is rooted in a dependency argument and that unemployment is interpreted as a "self-correcting condition" (Stephen, 1996:224). The issue of evaluation of these programs will also be explored in this chapter. Shragge, Murphy and Evans as well as others in keeping with established sociological method evaluated the success of the programs in terms of their "stated goals" (Shragge, 1997:1). As explained by Earl Babbie, programs of "social intervention" must be evaluated in terms of whether or not they accomplished their "intended result" (Babbie, 1992:346-347).

Basic to the understanding of any piece of social policy is the comprehension of what problem the policy purports to be addressing. The focus of this thesis is to provide a discussion of the active component of the NCARP and TAGS programs in the context of social policy reforms underway at the federal level of government. To fully comprehend the federal rationale that influenced the incorporation of an active component in both the NCARP and TAGS programs, an overview of the evolution of the crises in the northern cod fishery is provided in chapter four. This chapter first provides a brief discussion of Newfoundland's unique connection to the northern cod stock. In addition, a synopsis of the federal management decisions undertaken since the

1950's is incorporated in this chapter. It will be demonstrated that from the federal perspective, worker dependency resulting in "overcapacity" is the problem of the fishery. It is in terms of this analysis that the federal rationale behind the active component can be understood. "Overcapacity" is generally defined as "too many people chasing too few fish". This dependency argument has often been supported by the Government of Newfoundland as well. In fact, the Economic Recovery Commission appointed by the Liberal government of Clyde Wells in 1989 made supporting statements for this stance. Generally the Commission argued that the Fishery fostered UI dependency. The following statement indicates the Commission's view:

> What the industry offered was access to the unemployment insurance system, to the extent that roughly half of the annual income of harvesters and processors was received through UI benefits. The result was a fragile income structure centred on low earnings, where too many people required too much from the system (Government of Newfoundland, 1994b:5)

This perspective has directly influenced the development of active programming under the NCARP and TAGS programs. As with the formulation of any social policy the manner in which the problem is "typified" influences the policy response. As explained by Best:[1]

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[1] See Images of Issues: Typifying Contemporary Social Problems, by Joel Best.

> Typification occurs when claimsmakers characterize a problem's nature. Typification can take many forms. One of the most common forms is to give an orientation toward a problem, arguing that a problem is best understood from a particular perspective. Thus, claimsmakers assert that X is really a (moral, medical, criminal, political, etc.) problem (Best, 1995:8).

This "overcapacity" it is argued stems from an over-dependency on the stock fostered by an overly generous Unemployment Insurance Program. I will show that this dependency argument influenced the formulation of the NCARP and TAGS programs. The crisis and both programs were viewed by the federal government as a long awaited "opportunity" to address the "overcapacity" problem. Active programming was seen as the means to promoting adjustment out of the Fishery (Government of Canada,DFO,1992b).

Chapter five, "The Northern Cod Adjustment Program" describes both the NCARP program and the employment counselling program, Improving Our Odds (I.O.O), in order to provide evidence of the federal commitment to the active model of income support.

The discussion of I.O.O demonstrates that HRD created it in keeping with the notion of `active' income support and specifically, as explained by HRD, with the aim of encouraging those resistant to adjustment to "open their minds to new opportunities" (Cleary, January 5 1994:1). Encouraging

displaced fishery workers to exit the fishing industry and "seek alternative employment" was the stated goal of I.O.O. (Government of Canada,HRD,1994b:3). Specifically, I.O.O. according to Dr. Joan Whelan, who was contracted by HRD to design the program, was aimed at encouraging displaced workers who were reluctant to look for new employment opportunities to:

> ...identify any barriers which might be hindering any move toward a career change or their involvement in education and training (Government of Canada,HRD,1994d:4).

Chapter six, "The Atlantic Groundfish Strategy" describes the components of the TAGS program and provides a description of the Choices program. The TAGS program was designed with adjustment as its primary mandate, in response to the federal perception of continuing resistance to adjustment amongst displaced workers. This chapter also describes "Choices", an employment counselling program developed through the TAGS program. The focal point of the Choices program was to promote a sense of "ownership" amongst displaced fishery workers for their unemployment situation and to encourage adjustment out of the industry (Government of Canada,HRD, 1995b:3). This program was delivered in only one area of Newfoundland, the Great Northern Peninsula. HRD explains that Northern Peninsula clients were viewed as highly resistant to adjusting out of the fishery and that this resistance provided

the impetus and rationale for the development of the Choices program (ibid.:5).

Chapter seven provides a critique of the I.O.O and the Choices programs. The aim of this chapter is to demonstrate their inadequacies. Accepting the evaluative approach employed in the studies of Social Assistance experiments discussed in chapter three this chapter poses the question: was the stated goal of I.O.O. and Choices - adjustment out of the fishing industry - realized? Reviews of the adjustment training component of NCARP and TAGS have demonstrated the failure of active programming to meet their stated goals. It is shown that these programs were under-funded, poorly planned and disorganized. Furthermore, it is argued that these programs were punitive in nature and thus can be seen as workfare. Like similar social assistance experiments it can be argued that these programs were perhaps implemented to serve more as a "political symbol" and part of a general move to make income support more punitive.

Chapter eight reviews the main argument of the thesis and proposes further research in the area of social policy reform.

This thesis is primarily a study of government documents supplemented by informal interviews. Interviews were conducted with: Earle McCurdy, President of the Fish, Food and Allied Workers Union and Dr. Joan Whelan, Creator of I.O.O. In addition, interviews were conducted with former

I.O.O. and Choices facilitators and counsellors.

It should be noted that the process of describing the Improving Our odds and Choices programs was frustrated as a result of the unwillingness of HRD to provide certain information. For instance, despite numerous requests for statistics regarding the number of people who enrolled in the I.O.O. program and the total cost of the program this information has still not been released. HRD explained that the data on I.O.O. was integrated into a general national training database which does not break down the numbers for a particular program. In a letter dated April 22, 1998, HRD did manage to finally provide an estimate of the I.O.O participant numbers, but could not verify that this was the actual number. Furthermore, they maintained that the amount spent on I.O.O. is unavailable to HRD since the database does not specify the amounts spent on particular programs. In this same letter it is also implied that this information could be accessed, as indicated by the comment that it would be "quite time consuming and labour intensive" to obtain the data (See Appendix 1). It should be noted that, as can be ascertained from the research conducted for this thesis, specific reference to the I.O.O. program in the numerous NCARP and TAGS documents is limited. In regards to the Choices program, no mention was found at all in any TAGS reports except for the one internal evaluation report at the St. Anthony HRD Office.

Another limitation to obtaining more details on these programs was the fact that facilitators were unwilling to speak about the programs because they were afraid of reprisals, since they were currently unemployed and may be looking for employment at these training centres in the future. As one facilitator indicated: "I'll tell you about the program, but I won't be telling you anything negative". Other facilitators had relocated outside the province or country to look for employment and were difficult to contact.

The focus of this thesis now turns to the evolution of the social policy reform agenda.

> From the beginning, [then], the Tory government had its eye on reducing the protections offered by Canada's employment insurance system, and it has followed through with its plan. One of the key changes has been the withdrawal of federal funding from the unemployment insurance (UI) fund, leaving the system financed by contributions from employers and employees. By this move, the government has essentially washed its hands of responsibility for unemployment (McQuaig, 1993: 104).

Introduction

The objective of this chapter is to provide an outline of the social policy reform process as it has evolved at the federal level of government in Canada. This will provide a context for discussion of the NCARP and TAGS programs. Specifically, the focus will be directed to the shift from passive to active income support that has characterized the recent period. Part one of this chapter focuses on the evolution of this reform agenda beginning for convenience with the Progressive Conservative Mulroney Government in 1984, and continuing with the Liberal Chretien administration after 1993, in an effort to outline the development of successive governments' commitment to active social policies. Part two will provide a discussion of the concept of "active income support", defining it and demonstrating its origins.

The Mulroney Years

Directly following the 1984 election, the newly elected

Progressive Conservative Government, headed by Brian Mulroney, declared its commitment to comprehensive reform of income support programs (Evans, 1994:108). Consistent with reforms mapped out by Thatcher in the U.K. and Reagan in the U.S., the Canadian reform agenda centred around the shift from passive to active income support policies. In the U.K. this shift was embodied in the notion of a return to the Victorian virtues of "self-help", hard work and the value of "living within one's income", this being promoted by the Thatcher government as the antidote to the ills of the 20th Century (Sigsworth, 1988:10). In the U.S. the concept of `active' income support was represented during the Reagan Administration by notions of personal responsibility and independence. Basically there was a growing popularity for the argument that income support programs were inducing dependency and causing the disintegration of the National work ethic.

This dependency argument provided part of the rationale for the Mulroney government's reform plans. The argument that current income support programs were not feasible provided further rationale for these reforms. As explained by Finance Minister Michael Wilson, in November 1984, reform of social programs was necessary in order to make them more accountable socially and fiscally (Evans, 1994:108). Evans sums up Wilson's position thus:

> The twin principles of social and fiscal

> responsibility were to guide the "improvement and redesign" of social programmes. Social responsibility meant that, "wherever possible, and to a greater extent than is the case today, scarce resources should be diverted first to those in greatest need... (Evans, 1994:108).

As previously stated, central to the social policy reform agenda was the shift from so-called "passive income support" programs to "active income support programs". The support for this conversion emanated from a growing acceptance of an Unemployment Insurance (U.I) dependency argument. The implication was that current social policy was passive in nature as benefits were not linked to any reciprocal contract with clients and that this was promoting dependency. Contrary to passive programs, which basically involve a cash payment, active programs would require participation in some form of activity in exchange for benefits. These activities encompass a wide spectrum, including, for example, Adult Basic Education, job search seminars and career counselling.

1985 saw the active concept embodied in the newly created Canadian Job Strategy which required income support recipients to participate in some form of training in exchange for benefits (Mahon, 1990:74). Under this strategy $775 million was transferred into training initiatives, such as the Labour force Development Strategy (LFDS) (Mahon, 1990:74). In 1991, the federal government, through the Canadian Employment and Immigration Centre (CEIC) published "How To Find A Job", which

also reflected its commitment to the concept of active income support. This publication emphasized the importance of self-help in relation to accessing employment opportunities. As explained by Swift and Peerla:

> A testimonial to personal initiative, the hundred-page book allows that "it's not easy" to find a job these days. It reminds the jobless that there are "a lot of people like you". You learn that your personal resume is "your advertisement for you" - it might open the door to an interview, the chance to "sell yourself" (Swift, Peerla, 1996:46).

By 1988, the Mulroney reform agenda was spurred on by statements made by the OECD. At an OECD Conference held in Paris between March 16-18, 1988, the role of education and training as a means to reducing dependency dominated the agenda (OECD, 1989:3). It was at this conference that the term active income support was born. The OECD called for the development of "...attitudes which equip the workforce to adapt to and influence change" (OECD, 1989:12). As explained by the OECD:

> The basic thrust of the notion of the Active Society is to foster economic opportunity and activity for everyone in order to combat poverty, dependency and social exclusion (cited in Walters, 1997:224).

As interpreted by Dean:

> The active system obliges the active subject to exercise choice, and to undertake an intensive work on the self...(Dean, 1995:581).

And as explained by Walters, the active society:

> ... stakes the welfare of individuals upon their ability to constantly work on themselves, through practices like lifelong learning, to become or remain employed (Walters, 1997:221).

Furthermore, Dean explains that the OECD recommends that an "active system of income support" be developed in an effort to address the issues of "welfare dependency" (Dean, 1995:568). As interpreted by Dean:

> For the OECD, all programmes of the public employment services - training, job creation, rehabilitation, job search courses and counselling - can be regarded as active measures to be contrasted with passive social security systems of income maintenance (Dean, 1995:577).

As well:

> ...the active society is one that ensures people can work, and enables them to do so, but also encourages activities outside the sphere of paid employment. An active society includes not only participation in the labour-market but also participation in education and training, in voluntary associations, in part-time work...(Dean, 1995:578).

The OECD, according to Dean, sees the non-active society as having fostered the development of "persistent poverty", "welfare dependency", and the growth of a "permanent underclass" (Dean, 1995:579):

> It takes relatively little imagination to guess what constitutes the downside of this ideal of the active society and this is spelt out in the OECD's study, *The Future of Social Protection*. Here we find the spectre of the self-reproduction of a dependent group permanently living within the welfare system (Dean, 1995:579).

As explained by Walters:

> The active society argument now defines these populations as "inactive", a term with obvious negative connotations. It repeats the new right's familiar claim that social security is no longer capable of solving society's problems. Social security is in fact a large part of the problem. The active society argument holds that the best way for governments and other agencies to address social problems is through the promotion of activity (Walters, 1996:224).

The active system not only demands the unemployed individual constantly upgrade his or her employability through training, but extends these demands to the continuous reforming of one's attitudes and identity.

This thesis argues that proponents of the "active society" aim to not only reform social programs, but to actually reform people:

> As more emphasis is given to getting as many people as possible into an active role in society and as definitions of "active life" extend beyond paid employment, it is conceivable that education and training can become a positive alternative to income maintenance and/or a bridge to labour market *or other socially-desirable activities* (OECD, 1989:23).

Critics of the active approach have argued that it is a tool of social engineering. Proponents of social engineering in the United States were dubbed the "Virtuecrats" by Newsweek, a major U.S magazine (New Yorker, May 29, 1995:). The

"virtuecrats" are perhaps direct ideological descendants of Herbert Spencer and Samuel Smiles, well known self-help prophets of the 19th century.

Consistently the current Liberal Government like its Progressive Conservative predecessor has maintained that active income support would provide unemployed Canadians with what was necessary to "lift themselves up and find new opportunities" (Government of Canada,HRD,1995c:1). Like Mulroney, Chretien's proposed social policy reforms were rationalized as a response to increasing dependency amongst the unemployed. Early on, the Chretien government announced that it would embark on a Social Security Review (SSR) which would aid the government in its task of addressing the dependency problem. Announced by Lloyd Axworthy, Human Resources and Development Minister on January 31st, 1994, the SSR was described as a means to "retool" Canada's social policies so they would provide "rewards" and "incentives for work" and eliminate the "cycle of dependency" (Barlow, 1995:169). The particulars of the SSR mandate were outlined in the discussion paper, "Agenda Jobs and Growth - Improving Social Security in Canada", issued in October, 1994, (also known as "the Green Paper"). Stated in the Green Paper is the belief that a "new model" would provide U.I. "users" with the "help they need to help themselves" (Government of Canada,HRD, 1994f:21,22).

In the opening statement of this paper, Minister of Human Resources and Development, Lloyd Axworthy, indicated the determination of the Chretien Government to reform social security programs:

> "Improving Social Security" in Canada is a paper designed to give Canadians an opportunity to participate in the shaping of a crucial element of that agenda - the rebuilding of our social security system... My hope is that Canadians will respond to this invitation in an open, thoughtful and constructive way. The status quo is not good enough. Defending special interests will not work. We must tap into the good will that exists throughout the country to forge agreement on direction and develop the will to change (ibid.:5).

Furthermore, the paper suggests that Canada's social programs have not kept pace with a changing world. Unemployment Insurance it is stated, "...offers a prime example of how programs have lagged behind the pace of economic change" (ibid.: 8):

> Today's social security system doesn't deliver enough of what Canadians need, and spends too much money in the wrong places (ibid.: 10).

The paper asserts that the "nature of work is changing" globally, thus requiring an increased skills level among workers (ibid.: 15):

> The key to getting - and keeping a job - in the workplace of tomorrow will be up-to-date skills. This requires a continuing commitment to education and training from individual Canadians, employers, and governments (ibid.: 18).

The paper also argues that many unemployed people depending for instance, on Social Assistance are employable, but simply

lack proper skills:

> While definitions vary from province to province, provincial data indicate that 45 per cent of heads of households receiving social assistance were "employable" in March 1993 (ibid.: 20).

In addition:

> Too many people with careers derailed by change are not receiving the appropriate training (ibid.: 22).

Moreover, according to the Liberals, changes in the concept of social security are needed which will "...foster personal independence and act as a springboard to employment" and "meet modern needs" (ibid.: 25). Mutual responsibility is listed as one of the "guiding principles" which the Liberals argue will provide for these "modern needs":

> Providing basic support for those in need and those who cannot work is unquestioned. But for those with the potential to help themselves, improved government support must be targeted at those who demonstrate a willingness and commitment to self-help (ibid.:25).

In the Liberals' view mutual responsibility should be encouraged "by engaging the client in deciding on an individual action plan, as an exercise which would supposedly give the individual a role in planning their future (ibid: 31). The Green Paper states that mutual responsibility could be further endorsed if personal investment was required:

> We know that training programs that require the students to put in some of their own money work better than when students make no investment of their own. The federal and provincial governments have begun to recognize these lessons, and experiment with innovative, cooperative solutions

(ibid.:31).

Business groups and other reform proponents applauded the "Green Paper". The Globe and Mail, Canada's national newspaper, billed the paper as "admirably ambitious" and called for Axworthy to

> ...move quickly to persuade the public of the "distortions, disincentives and discrepancies in social programs," and of the need for reform. It called UI a "deeply distorted social entitlement...a corrosive subsidy for business and an unnecessary supplement for individuals...it has become a tax on jobs. Most damning, it has helped to establish a culture of dependency." (cited in Barlow, 1995:175-176).

The "Green Paper" proposals coincided with the Finance Department's publication of "A New Framework For Economic Policy", soon to be known as the "Purple Book". The "Purple Book" focused on the reforming of social security through massive cuts. As outlined by Barlow and Campbell:

> The Purple Book set out to "reinvent government" - that is have it "withdraw from those things that are no longer essential to the public interest or that can be better accomplished by provincial or local government"; in other words, make government smaller... (cited in Barlow, 1995:136).

Support for this stance was provided by right-wing Globe and Mail the [C.D.] Howe Institute and Fraser Institutes:

> The [C.D] Howe [Institute] published a pamphlet called "The Courage to Act", which urged the government to speed up its deficit reduction timetable, wiping it out over three years...Shortly thereafter, Globe and Mail editorial writer Andrew Coyne published his prescription for balancing the budget through massive spending cuts - $24 billion over three years, half of which would come from

> social programs...This was the theme of a Fraser Institute conference held in Toronto in late November called "Hitting the Wall, Is Canada Bankrupt?" (Barlow, Campbell, 1995:147).

With this kind of support government pushed forward with its reform plans. Unemployment Insurance regulations, for example, underwent numerous reforms in 1994, which resulted in a reduced financial commitment to the U.I Program in conjunction with more rigid qualifying criteria. Specifically, the "minimum qualifying period [was] raised from 10 to 12 weeks" in addition to a reduction in the duration of benefits from 32 to 26 weeks (CCPA Monitor, November 1995:12).

Support for UI reforms came also from the Newfoundland Provincial Government's Economic Recovery Commission. According to the Commission, Newfoundland's economic problems stemmed from an overly generous, dependency inducing, UI program. The Economic Recovery Commission was formed by the Wells' Liberal Government in 1989 and mandated to develop and encourage entrepreneurship as a means to economic recovery. As explained in the Commission's 1993-1994 yearly report:

> This UI dependence in the fishery has had impacts across other sectors... The UI system inadvertently created disincentives to sustainable work and stifled entrepreneurship... Our overdependence on the income security system hindered economic development in myriad ways (Government of Newfoundland, 1994b:5,6).

Furthermore:

> Income security reform is critical if we are to remove disincentives to work and education and free

up the creative energies... (ibid.:19).

It was in this context that the TAGS program was announced. Consistent with the notion that income support programs are too generous and induce dependency, federal Minister of Fisheries , Brian Tobin announced on April 19, 1994, that under the new TAGS program a six per cent cut in benefits would be implemented. The TAGS program, was based on the assumption that incentives would move people to take advantage of existing opportunities. Those who could secure employment outside the fishery would be rewarded with an employment bonus (Government of Canada,HRD,1994e:3). The stated goal of TAGS was to "improve an individual's employability and achieve labour market self-sufficiency" (Government of Canada,HRD,1994c).

By December, 1995, as a consequence of the Social Security Review and the support of the Business Community, the Federal Government put forth a new Employment Insurance Act (EI) in the House of Commons. The new EI legislation responded to those who called for government to curb the excesses of the current system, which they argued was damaging the national work ethic. This view was reflected in comments made by David Frum in The Financial Post, when he argued that the welfare state had:

> sucked people out of the workforce and on to the welfare rolls... that inculcates in its citizens an ethic of "I want" in place of an older ethic of "I

should" (Frum, 1995:24).

In an article titled, "UI falls to axe" in the Evening Telegram, Axworthy was reported as stating that government was responding to these complaints, arguing that:

> ...reform was needed to a badly outdated program to give workers more incentive to find new jobs faster, train for others, create their own or stick with the ones they have for longer (Cox, December 2, 1995:1).

In Axworthy's words:

> Canadians need more than just income support. They need a new bridge, a new design to meet a very different workplace to give people a new sense of security that when jobs change, there's a chance to change with it (ibid.).

This message was reinforced in the federal guide to EI, "A 21st Century Employment System For Canada", published in December, 1995:

> This legislation represents a shift towards a dynamic human investment approach to social policy. Dynamic because instead of just offering basic income support, it offers unemployed Canadians the tools to lift themselves up and find new opportunities (Government of Canada,HRD,1995c:1).
>
> Employment Insurance contains significant structural changes to Insurance benefits. EI also represents a shift in the way insurance funds are spent. Specifically, EI features a larger direct investment in jobs and work opportunities for unemployment Canadians (ibid.:19).

The shift from passive to active income support is justified by the Government as part of the key to keeping consistent with the trends in Japan and Germany (ibid.):

> This important shift from passive income support to

> active labour market services follows the lead taken by countries such as Japan and Germany. To reap maximum economic advantage from technological change, most advanced industrial countries are placing a much greater emphasis on active employment measures. Canada should be no different (ibid.).

Groups such as, the Canadian Labor Congress, criticized the new EI program, arguing that it would impose hardship on the unemployed. As reported by the Evening Telegram:

> The Canadian Labor Congress predicts only 33 per cent of unemployed workers will have access to the insurance system (Cox, April,16, 1996: 14).

Elaine Price, President of the Newfoundland and Labrador Federation of Labour also spoke of dire consequences, calling the reforms the "meanest, vicious attacks we've ever seen in this country on unemployed people" (Stokes-Sullivan, December 2, 1995:7).

Concurrent with the reforms underway on the social policy front was the evolving crisis in the Atlantic Fishery. The crisis was deemed by the federal government to be at least partly the result of worker dependency on the UI program. Consistent with the federal trend to formulate active income support programs, the response programs targeted at the displaced fishery workers incorporated an adjustment training component. This gave expression to the evolving social policy reforms.

When confronted with the fish crisis and the massive displacement of workers as a result of the northern cod

moratorium announcement in July, 1992, the federal government proceeded to formulate the active model of income support in the NCARP policy. The active model was viewed as vital to addressing the dependency issue in the industry and moving people out. The federal government stressed the significance of motivating the displaced fishery workers to take responsibility for securing new jobs. John Crosbie, Minister of Fisheries and Oceans, explained that the NCARP policy was a reflection of earlier U.I reforms. Specifically, the concept of active income support would be the principle component underlying these policies. The underlying message conveyed was that NCARP was dedicated to active programming and that the level of benefits would be conditional upon participation in some form of activity. In a federal news release on July 17, 1992, Crosbie announced that:

> Those who opt into these programs will continue to receive the full income replacement payments up to the maximum $406 per week throughout the northern cod moratorium to the spring of 1994. Eligible individuals who choose not to enter one of these programs by the end of the year will revert to basic payments of $225 a week for the remainder of the moratorium period (Government of Canada,DFO, 1992b).

The adjustment component was also touted as an "opportunity" for NCARP clients to create a new future. As explained by Ross Reid, Parliamentary secretary to the Department of Fisheries and Oceans, adjustment training was to provide an "opportunity" to create a new future (Doyle,Sept.18, 1992:21).

The rules governing the NCARP Adjustment training program are described in detail in an NCARP options booklet which was distributed in February, 1993 to all potential NCARP clients. As had been iterated in previous federal news releases the NCARP guide book underscored the idea that recipients who participate in some form of training would qualify for higher benefits.

In 1993, with the closure of other Atlantic fisheries, 7600 more displaced fishery workers were invited by John Crosbie to participate in what Crosbie described as a "huge social experiment" already underway. In Crosbie's words:

> We've got a huge social experiment going on in the northern-cod areas and this will be another major social experiment...The question is: will people take advantage of the opportunities we're trying to give them to improve their skills? (Cox, Kevin, April 24, 1993:A5).

A year after the NCARP policy was formulated, the federal commitment to the active model of income support had not wavered. On August 31, 1993, in a federal news release, Bernard Valcourt, Minister of Human Resources and Labour, echoed the call for self-help through training initiatives. Valcourt asserted that "long-term solutions" to the "adjustment challenge" in Atlantic Canada "can only be achieved by providing individuals with the training and additional skills needed to seek out new opportunities".

Defining "Active"

> ...active citizenship is an almost totalitarian concept, because it implies mobilisation. It is government saying that everybody has to do certain things (Sir Ralf Dahrendorf, in Guardian, August 1, 1990:A17).

What is meant by the concept of active income support and where did the term originate? It can be argued that active income support is not a new concept, but is simply a new version of the self-help philosophy, that marked the Victorian Era (Mullaly, Weinman, 1994:98). Like the infamous Poor Law of the 1800s the concept of active income support is based on the notion of self-help. The self-help philosophy was rooted in the notion of individual responsibility, hard work and reciprocity and conditionality. Reciprocity and conditionality, then as now refers to the notion that there is "no free lunch". Therefore, recipients of income support should be required to perform some function in exchange for benefits. In the Victorian Era this function would probably entail some form of hard labour. Today this would probably involve some form of training or counselling program.

Since the 1970's the self-help movement has gained a momentum and following perhaps unparalleled since its apex in the Victorian Era. The nineteenth century was marked by its strong moralistic approach to poverty. Groups comprised of

the middle and upper classes joined in a common vision, that of saving the souls of the poor. Citing the minutes of a "Friendly Society" meeting which took place in 1890, P.H. J.H. Gosden provides insight into the concept of self-help:

> It is self-help that makes the man and man-making is the aim which the Almighty has everywhere impressed upon creation. It is thrift by which self-help for the masses dependent upon labour is principally made effective. For them, thrift is a symbol and instrument of independence and of liberty, indispensable conditions of all permanent good...(Gosden, 1973:1).

That self-help was the key to all that was "good", was the unwavering message of many self-help prophets of the period. Samuel Smiles, for example, argued that:

> The spirit of self-help is the root of all genuine growth in the individual; and, exhibited in the lives of many, it constitutes the true source of national vigour and strength. Help from without is often enfeebling in its effects, but help from within invariably invigorates (Smiles, 1859:13).

He proceeds to argue that:

> National progress is the sum of individual industry, energy, and uprightness, as national decay is of individual idleness, selfishness, and vice (ibid.:14).

Another self-help prophet of this era was Herbert Spencer, who also praised the virtues of individualism and self-reliance. Spencer argued that state help would in essence create disincentives in individuals, and that the state, or the "artificial agency" as he referred to it, would actually hinder one's happiness, as it stunted the use of

one's faculties, which had been allotted to the individual in order to deal with the conditions one found oneself in. Spencer explains his theory on the state as follows:

> But in truth the transaction is a yet more detrimental one than it thus appears, for even the gift is a delusion...Now no scheme could be more self-defeating. Man as briefly delineated at the outset, consists of a congeries of faculties qualifying him for surrounding conditions. Each of these faculties, if normally developed, yields to him, when exercised, a gratification constituting part of his happiness...To do anything for him by some artificial agency, is to supersede certain of his powers - is to leave them unexercised, and therefore to diminish his happiness (Spencer, 1896:125).

It is a very similar dependency argument that has been central to the calls for recent social policy reform. With national unemployment rates increasing since the 1970's and U.I and welfare caseloads on the rise, a dependency argument emerged from those in favour of restricting the social safety net.

A Weakening Commitment to Social Programs

In the 1930s and 1940s in western industrialized nations there was a struggle for social reforms that resulted in the formulation of what has evolved into the social safety net or welfare state. Central to these reforms was the notion of "entitlements" or "rights", in contrast to those of reciprocity and conditionality. By the late 1940s the second

World War had just ended, and so too had its accompanying reality of full employment. However, the image was imbedded in Canadians' minds, thus prompting a movement for a more Just society. The idea of "rights" and "entitlements" to "unconditional" support from the state during times of crisis was central to the movement and to the conception of social programs. Despite opposition from big business, social programs were "won" and expanded throughout the 1950s, 1960s and 1970s (Dobbin, 1995:2):

> In 1941 we won unemployment insurance. In 1952 the Old Age Security Act was passed replacing the means test established in 1927. In 1965 eligibility for Old Age Security moved towards age 65. In 1966 the Guaranteed Income Supplement (GIS) was created and the Canada Pension Plan was introduced (ibid.:5).

By 1966, Canada had passed the Canada Assistance Plan (CAP) which basically protected these entitlements. CAP was guided by five principles :

1. The right to income when a person is in need.
2. The right to an amount of income that takes into account budgetary requirements.
3. The right to appeal.
4. The right not to have to work for welfare.
5. The right to income assistance regardless of the province the person is from (NAPO,1995:2).

The Emergence of a New Right Movement

By the early 1970s the opinions of those opposed to the tenets embodied in the CAP were amplified through a growing

New Right Movement, which resurrected the philosophy of self-help. Defined by Andrew Gamble, the New Right Movement is:

> ...not a unified movement or a single body of doctrine. The term itself is a contentious one and it is important to distinguish between the liberal and conservative strands of the New Right. What unites all its strands, however, and justifies the use of the term `New Right' for this strange amalgam of individuals, pressure groups, and research institutes, is their common rejection and criticism of the ideas, institutions, and policies of social democracy, of corporatism, and of the 1940's settlement (Gamble, 1989:4).

Patricia Marchak identifies the New Right as:

> ...an international movement, with its central location in the United States but with institutes and publications in all the industrialized, capitalist countries (Marchak, 1988:188-189).

Basically, the new right embodies a rejection of Keynesian Economics plus a weakening commitment to state help for the poor and unemployed. The implication is that people will help themselves. Political observers argue that the recent rejection of the welfare state has arisen out of a strong sense of disillusionment with its inability to address social and economic problems. As interpreted by Marchak, the New Right:

> ...addresses some outstanding complaints and fears held by many people in the industrial countries. It provides simple answers to these. It argues, for example, that economic decline in these countries is caused by greedy unions and overgrown governments. The solution: attack unions and dismantle governments. It argues that there are too many freeloaders on the welfare system. The

> simple solution: get rid of welfare systems (ibid.:188).

The New Right views social programs as overly generous and as dependency inducers. The popularizing of this view has led to a situation in which:

> ...governments and business leaders in Canada and throughout the industrialized have abandoned the social-democratic consensus over the welfare state. In their eyes the principles that underlay the social policy reforms of the 1940-1975 period are obsolete, the embodiment of a bygone era, redolent of the "extravagant" utopianism" of the post-war economic boom (Leduc, 1996:1).

Conclusion

This chapter has provided a synopsis of the federal reform process and the ideological underpinnings of the active concept of income support. It was shown that social policy reforms were initiated in 1984 by the Progressive Conservative government of Brian Mulroney as a reflection of the reforms underway in the U.S and the U.K. A U.I dependency argument provided the rationale for proposed reforms. As explained in this chapter the dependency argument is not a novel argument, but is rooted in the self-help philosophy that guided the (famous) 19th century Victorian Poor Law. This dependency argument has always existed in social policy debates but was popularized in 1988 by the OECD who promoted the notion of the active society.

The next chapter provides a brief discussion of active experiments conducted within social assistance programs showing how the concept has been put into action.

> Canadian society is in the midst of a marked ideological shift. The spectrum of political debate in Canada has narrowed and simultaneously glided rapidly to the right. The classical left-centre-right ideological pivot characteristic of the post-Second World War era, to the extent that it identified different policy baskets, has disintegrated. Canadian political life now rotates on a new axis (Workman, 1996:15).

Introduction

This chapter provides a review of Canada's provincial government social experiments with active programming and explores the theme of workfare as well as the issue of the evaluation of social policy. Part one examines the link between the concept of active income support and the concept of workfare, in addition to examining their underlying rationale. It will be argued that these programs have failed to achieve their primary mandate - getting people back to work. The issue of objective evaluation is also discussed. It is explained that both the federal and provincial governments exaggerate the success of these experiments despite evidence of inadequacies. As put forth by Shragge,

Babbie and others, the only true yardstick for measuring the outcome of these experiments is to determine whether or not the stated goal of the programs was met (Shragge,1997:1). Part two of this chapter provides an overview of each program coupled with a brief analysis of their outcomes.

Reviewing Social Assistance Experiments

So-called passive social assistance programs are regarded as a disincentive to labour market participation and have therefore been targeted for major amendments. The belief that unemployment results from deficits in the unemployed underlies the formulation of active programming. As explained by Jennifer Stephen:

> Current labour adjustment practices, and labour force programming more generally, have worked to frame a new discourse about unemployment, its causes, and the ultimate solution. This discourse equates unemployment with individual skills deficiency. The apparatus surrounding this approach takes the form of labour adjustment and training services that implicate the individual worker as the problem to be corrected (Stephen, 1996:224).

The defining characteristic of active programs is the element of conditionality that is evident in them. The notion of conditional welfare refers to the linking of income support benefits to participation in some form of specified activity. These activities include for example job search workshops,

employment counselling and Adult Basic Education. It is the use of conditionality that prompts critics to label active programs as workfare.

The "official" definition of "workfare" as defined by the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) and the European Union is much more limited. As explained by Peter Robinson these organizations adhere to rigid definitions of the concepts of passive and active income support, and workfare:

> Passive labour-market policy refers to the payment of unemployment and other related benefits to people out of work. All the OECD countries have systems of income support for people experiencing unemployment, based in part on social insurance for those with labour market experience...
>
> Active labour-market policy refers to work, training or other programmes designed to help the unemployed move back into employment...
>
> Workfare is a term of North American origin used to describe a regime where there is a requirement that recipients of welfare benefits undertake work sponsored by the state as a condition for receiving those benefits (Robinson, 1998:86-87).

There has been an ongoing debate over the term workfare. The proponents of workfare seek to restrict the term's use because it is politically loaded. Critics of active programming argue that while workfare has traditionally been characterized by the element of demanding labour in exchange for financial benefits, the notion of "requirement" has evolved to include subtle forms of coercion (Shragge,1997:13).

Recent exploration of active programming in social assistance policies has prompted the assertion that any income support program that pushes individuals to be active in exchange for higher benefits also constitutes workfare. As explained by Eric Shragge in his assessment of active programs implemented in Quebec in the 1980's:

> "Requirement" is a critical term in the workfare discourse. Programs of apprenticeship, training, and further education for those receiving social assistance have been available for many years. The fundamental change lies in governments linking the qualification for benefits, or the actual levels of benefits, to participation in programs (Shragge, 1997: 13).

Shragge expands this argument:

> Usually the benefits are reduced for non-compliance. Thus workfare sets up a situation for welfare recipients in which participation is the key to maximizing benefits (Shragge, 1997:19).

Dunk, McBride and Nelson, co-editors of The Training Trap, citing the work of Stella Lord, concur with Shragge's argument regarding the concept of "requirement" and how its meaning has expanded. They argue that development of an infrastructure based on counselling, assessment, and computerized information about recipients may mean that the risk of appearing to be "uncooperative" will in future place a greater onus on "suitable" recipients to participate in employability programming. Thus in practice it may be difficult to draw the distinction between voluntary and coercive programs (cited in Dunk, 1996: 5).

Basically, workfare may act as an umbrella term for a variety of income support programs that incorporate the notion of active participation in exchange for benefits. In this thesis the broader definition of workfare put forth by Shragge, Dunk, Evans and others is accepted.

Ignoring the Economic Realities

The economic context of unemployment is often disregarded by proponents of active income support despite statistics which clearly demonstrate that unemployment has persisted as a major problem since the 1970s. In fact:

> In 1989 at least 3.5 million Canadians were members of the non-standard workforce (including part-time, limited-term, temporary-help agency work and own-account self-employment). As a proportion of the labour market, non-standard/flexible workers constitute, depending upon the measure, between 28 to 34 per cent of the total. Non-standard employment forms have been increasing rapidly since the 1970's. Only one-half of all new jobs created between 1979 and 1993 were "full-time". As well as offering lower wages, many of the so-called "full-time" jobs created are far less secure than in the past marked by bouts of joblessness or the necessity of frequent job changes (Shields, 1996:58).

As well, the world of work is changing rapidly and dramatically. As explained by John Shields

> ...labour-market trends clearly demonstrate the creation of more "flexible" and far less secure employment. Job growth has been most pronounced in non-standard working arrangements, especially part-time and limited contract work. The rhetoric of skill enhancement thus stands in stark contrast to

> the reality of contemporary labour-market developments and conditions...(ibid.:53).

In effect, unemployment levels have reached epidemic levels, defined by many as "structural" unemployment. D.W. Livingstone suggests that

> *Structural unemployment* is the starkest forms of underemployment. Persistent unemployment of people actively looking for paid work has reached levels unprecedented since the 1930's. An average of over thirty million people have been unemployed in the twenty-six OECD countries since the early 1980's, compared with under ten million during the 1950's and 1960's (Livingstone, 1996: 76).

Despite compelling evidence of failure from U.S. and recent Canadian studies the Government of Canada continues to forge ahead with reforms and highlights these initiatives as testament to the value of (self-help) workfare programs. These claims of success are apparently based on conjecture, since government has not conducted any extensive assessments of the programs. Despite the fact that $400 million was spent in 1988-89 on "more than 3,000 pilot projects" the Canadian Government, according to Evans, has not conducted any extensive "evaluations of their impact" (Evans, 1993:55). As explained by Evans, "just as a glass may be half-full or half-empty, program effects can be interpreted alternatively as positive indicators of success or evidence of failure" (ibid.:58).

These observations invite the question: How should programs be evaluated - what are the defining criteria for determining success ? Those like Jonathan Murphy, Robert Mullaly, Eric Shragge, and Marc-Andre Deniger and others who have conducted critical analyses of these active social assistance programs propose that these programs should be evaluated using two criteria (Shragge, 1997:1). Firstly, these programs should be evaluated "from the point of view of the realization of their stated goals", and secondly in terms of the broader context pertaining to the underlying ideology influencing these programs (Shragge, 1997:1). The following section provides an overview of recent case studies that incorporated this method of evaluation and documents the overall failure of active programming.

Part-Two - An Overview of Canadian Workfare Experiments

Recent active experiments with provincial social assistance programs embodied the reform principles of conditionality, personal responsibility and independence envisioned by both the Mulroney and the current Liberal Governments. While the format of each provincial program varies, the following discussion demonstrates that they are all a reflection of the active philosophy of self-help.

Alberta

Jonathan Murphy provides an analysis of three Alberta programs: Alberta Community Employment (ACE), The Employment Skills Program (ESP) and The Alberta Job Corps. Murphy unveils a number of myths in the ideology of the programs as well as the failure of the programs to meet their stated goals. Motivating individuals on social assistance to participate in the workforce and exit the social assistance program was the focal point of these three programs. As reported in the Evening Telegram:

> All able-bodied welfare recipients are now expected to take part in a six-month work experience program or find jobs on their own (Necheff, August 26, 1995:68).

By 1995, 32,804 individuals had participated in these Alberta workfare programs, which the provincial government claims resulted in a major reduction in the welfare caseloads. As explained by Murphy:

> The government claims extraordinarily high rates of success for its job training programs, far higher than achieved in any other job training programs in North America. For example, 73 per cent of Alberta Community Employment participants "no longer depend on welfare one year after completing" the program. The Job Corps program did even better, claiming 85 per cent were no longer on welfare a year after completing the program, with an additional 5 per cent working but receiving a supplement (Murphy, 1997: 113).

The minister of Social Services, Mike Cardinal, as reported in the Evening Telegram, stated that Alberta had successfully

"transformed a once passive welfare system into an active employment program (Necheff, August 26, 1995:68). The Evening Telegram, reported also that Premier Ralph Klein was boasting of a reduction in its welfare caseload by "almost half" (ibid.).

Success is defined by the Alberta Government in terms of the number of participants who leave the social assistance programs. Murphy argues that upon closer examination these claims of "extraordinarily high rates of success" are questionable (Murphy, 1997: 113). In light of its claims it is peculiar that the Alberta government has withheld the evaluations they claim to have conducted (ibid.). Statistics show that there was a 52 per cent reduction in the welfare rolls between 1992 and 1995 in Alberta, but Murphy suggests that while on the surface this progress appears positive, the true situation of the unemployed has been masked by these statistics (ibid.:120). Murphy poses the question: What has happened to those who have left the system? Unfortunately, the Alberta Government has failed to monitor the participants' progress after they left the programs (ibid.:116), a fact that prompted the Alberta Auditor General to criticize the Alberta Government and shed doubt on its claims by stating that, "no clear link has been established between caseload reductions and the various reforms and initiatives introduced" (ibid.:115). As explained by Ross Klein, who also studied the

Alberta experiments, social assistance reforms implemented in 1993, in Alberta disqualified many former recipients from accessing further benefits, subsequently having the effect of reducing their Welfare Caseload. This resulted from new rules that disqualified those who had voluntarily quit their jobs, and those who were unmarried, as well as childless couples. (Klein, 1996:134).

Murphy argues the Alberta reforms have forced many individuals to relocate to Saskatchewan to qualify for social assistance benefits. It is notable that in 1994, Saskatchewan's welfare caseload rose by 18.8 per cent (Murphy, 1997:120). As well, one-third of the caseload decline can be attributed to reclassification of social assistance clients as students in training programs(Klein, 1996:134-135). As reported in the Evening Telegram, Edmonton outreach worker, Heidi Veluw also wondered "what's happened to them since the cutbacks".

> Her missing clients are among the thousands who saw benefits reduced or terminated since the province revamped its welfare policy in March 1993. But thousands have left the province for greener pastures, many with one-way bus tickets courtesy of the Alberta government. That has prompted complaints from other provinces that Alberta is exporting its poor. Thousands more have simply melted into the urban or rural landscapes, anonymous and voiceless (Necheff, August 26, 1995:68).

Basically, the Alberta Department of Family and Social Services implemented reforms that have restricted access to

assistance. Klein explains:

> Expenditures for active assistance (for those engaged in activities enhancing their employability or who receive a social assistance supplement to earnings) remained relatively constant. The intent of a workfare style approach was to discourage those looking for a "free-ride" from receiving social assistance.
>
> In the short run, the approach has reduced the cost of social assistance to the Alberta government but has not changed the fundamental problem of unemployment (Klein, 1996:135-136).

Murphy concludes that the caseload statistics have masked the true picture of unemployment in Alberta. Drawing a comparison to similar initiatives in Michigan, U.S., Murphy suggests that perhaps many former participants in Alberta's workfare programs have been disqualified from the social assistance system and may be left in dire straits. Citing similar research conducted in Michigan where monitoring devices were implemented and where it was found that "a significant proportion were in dire straits", Murphy argues that

> The Alberta government's reluctance to track what happens to former recipients may be connected to a fear that such a study might reveal how many families have been stranded with absolutely no source of income (1997:116).

Murphy also argues, as does Evans, Klein and others, that these programs are destined to fail because their underlying philosophy is misguided. These Alberta workfare programs

emerged out of negative images rooted in false assumptions about the unemployed. As explained by Murphy, "at times the passion to push people into the workforce reached ludicrous extremes":

> Departmental spokesman Bob Scott defended cutting a blind epileptic man off a provincial disability pension: "People who are visually impaired are not unemployable. Visually disabled groups would be upset to hear that...They can take training." The next month controversy over a similar departmental measure drew his comment that "there are some quadriplegics that may be employable. In order to defend the forced work programs, recipients were portrayed as a lazy and shiftless mob. Announcing an expansion to the Job Corps program, Scott noted, "this move will result in a huge lifestyle change for some people. They'll have to shave, shower, and go to work like everyone else " (cited in Murphy, 1997:119).

Murphy suggests that contrary to claims that Alberta's social assistance program acted as a disincentive to work, in fact, the opposite is true since the level of benefits was "60 per cent less than minimum wage" and could therefore not logically be seen as a disincentive to work (Murphy, 1997:119).

The National Anti-Poverty Organization (NAPO) has also criticized the Alberta workfare experiments and warns of the dangers associated with these workfare programs. Specifically NAPO argues that participants are providing employers with a cheap pool of labour which can be used to replace others. As explained by NAPO:

> Employability programs do not create jobs, they replace them. The Alberta Community Employment Program (ACE) provides jobs for people on welfare

> at $6.00 an hour. A Red Deer hospital recently laid off a number of full-time permanent workers and replaced them with inexperienced and poorly paid ACE workers (Toupin,1995:48).

British Columbia

Ross Klein's examination of British Columbia's programs comes to similar conclusions. Klein states that in May 1993, B.C. introduced the Ministry of Skills, Training and Labour, mandated to deliver training programs. This Ministry introduced Skills BC which was designed to "...provide [the] assessment, counselling, and referral of persons seeking employment or employability enhancement" (Klein, 1996:137). In addition, a second program called the Self-Sufficiency Project was "...designed as a research project to determine the effectiveness of an income supplement in facilitating labour force attachment" (Klein, 1996:138). Like the Alberta workfare initiatives, the BC programs were based on the assumption that employment possibilities existed and that social assistance clients need incentives to work:

> Alberta's strategy assumes that economic need caused by the reduction of financial benefits will motivate people to take a job; the Self Sufficiency Program assumes that the financial inducements promised with employment - even minimum-wage employment - will motivate SAR's to take a job (ibid.).

But Klein challenges this attitude stating that:

> While individuals may indeed find employment, the continuing high national unemployment rates suggest that the need for jobs is greater than the number

of jobs available (ibid.:139).

He goes on to suggest that perhaps the government implements these programs more as a monitoring device rather than as a serious means of getting people jobs:

> Is the concern embodied in mandatory programs focussed on fostering labour force attachment and creating self-sufficiency, or is it more simply a reflection of an attitude that being on the public dole should be as unattractive as possible (ibid.:140).

In response to the "dearth of employment opportunities" Klein argues that it is necessary to ask why government continues to promote employability programs as the key to employment (ibid:141).

Quebec

Eric Shragge and Marc-Andre Deniger's study of similar programs delivered in Quebec evoked a comparable conclusion. They too explain that Quebec social assistance reforms were based on the premise that social assistance clients were lacking motivation to work. As in Alberta and British Columbia, the "realities of unemployment - the lack of jobs" was overlooked:

> It is assumed that the people were showing up on the welfare rolls because of individual problems that could be remedied with appropriate training, incentive to participate in the programs, and a strong push back into the labour market. The reform process paid little attention to the realities of unemployment - the lack of jobs - as a

> possible factor in the increase in the number of Social Aid recipients (Shragge, 1997: 63).

Shragge and Deniger explain that many social assistance recipients do not hold a high school diploma and would probably find the chance to enrol in such a program "desirable". But in light of the current economic obstacles Shragge and Deniger assert that this type of basic education will not conceivably enrich their employment prospects (Shragge, Deniger, 1997:69). They contend that for training programs to effect any long-term adjustments in terms of the unemployment rate, it is imperative that "systematic planning of programs" is done (Shragge, Deniger, 1997:70). Particularly, programs need to be designed to deliver training in "particular skills" areas that are in demand by the "current labour market" (Shragge, Deniger, 1997:70). Shragge and Deniger observed that "neither this kind of planning, nor the necessary financial resources, have been forthcoming" (Shragge, Deniger, 1997:70). Their research focussed on three major workfare programs: Rattrapage Scolaire, Program to Aid Integration in Employment (PAIE) and Experience de Travail (EXTRA). Rattrapage Scolaire was targeted at:

> ... younger recipients, women, people born outside of Canada, and single parents. Initially this program was designed to help young welfare recipients to finish high school. ...the program was expanded to include basic literacy, pre-secondary courses, preparation for professional training,... The assumption underlying this program is that more education will lead to greater

> prospects for employment. For many participants this program is a first step, seen as pre-employability preparation that leads to further training as part of a transition from welfare to work (Shragge, Deniger, 1997:68).

The EXTRA program was designed to "integrate" social assistance recipients into employment "activities" with the sponsorship of community organizations:

> EXTRA's objectives, related to improving the employment prospects of participants, including building up individual capacities, developing and maintaining good work habits, helping people contribute to the life of the sponsoring community organization, and reducing social isolation through participation in community projects.
>
> The sponsoring organization receives $100 per month for each participant, while the recipient gets $100 per month more than their previous benefit level. When the project is over, the recipient receives the lowest benefit level, and is not eligible for another program for six months (Shragge, Deniger, 1997:70).

The PAIE program was targeted at social assistance recipients who had received assistance for six of the last 12 months. Specifically:

> The employer "hires" the recipient into a private business or organization or municipal services for 35 hours per week for a period of 18 to 26 weeks. The subsidy for the recipient's salary goes directly to the employer. Private sector companies receive two-thirds of the salary as subsidy, while municipalities and other organizations receive the full amount. At the end of the program, participants can qualify for Unemployment Insurance (Shragge and Deniger, 1997:71).

Shragge and Deniger's evaluation of these three programs indicates weaknesses in the workfare approach. Of Rattrapage

Scolaire they found "...about half the participants made gains in relation to employability, and 27 per cent were able to complete their high school diplomas" (Shragge, Deniger, 1997:68). But Shragge and Deniger cite two studies of Rattrapage Scolaire which demonstrate the limited success of the program:

> There were two studies which evaluated the impact of this program on employment. The first found that non-participants performed better than participants; however, this study was deemed to be inaccurate because the control group was not comparable. A follow-up study conducted between 1987 and 1991 revealed that the rate of exit from social assistance was lower for participants than non-participants. This study also showed that in terms of labour market integration there was no significant difference either in the short term (after 7 months) or in the longer term (after 19 months) (Shragge and Deniger, 1997:68-69).

Basically, Shragge and Deniger concur with the conclusions of a 1993 study of Rattrapage Scolaire conducted by Deniger and Provost. In their words:

> This is a quick fix program - education at a discount. As well, it lacks the necessary linkages or continuum between basic education and the diverse programs that would lead to more qualified professional training (Shragge and Deniger, 1997:69).

They also criticized the EXTRA program for facilitating the creation of a pool of "cheap labour" for sponsoring community organizations:

> Another criticism raised of the EXTRA programs was that they served the goals of the community organizations with little consideration for the needs of participants. There is no doubt that

> these programs provided a source of cheap labour; 15 per cent of the organizations used these grants for their own survival and 25 per cent participated because of the cheap labour available (Shragge and Deniger, 1997:71).

NAPO supports this argument, reporting that workfare programs in Quebec have benefited the participating companies. One Quebec company, Astral Tech, for instance, reported an extra profit of $100,000 over a fourteen month period as a result of its usage of workfare participants instead of regular paid employees (Toupin,1995:48).

Shragge and Deniger report that the PAIE program placed 37 per cent of its participants in jobs "within three months of leaving the program", although "there was no significant variation in this rate between those who completed the program and those who dropped out (Shragge, Deniger, 1997:72). The major critical comment Shragge and Deniger made of the PAIE program was the fact that since the program was targeted at males of at least 30 years of age who were "relatively well educated", the benefits of the program were given to "those who faced the least barriers to entering the labour market". Shragge and Deniger explain:

> Sixty-seven per cent of the PAIE participants had no dependents, and 16 per cent were single parents. Eighty-five per cent were under 45 years of age, and one-half were between 30 and 44 years of age. PAIE participants were relatively well educated. Thirty-six per cent had been on welfare for less than two years, and 30 per cent for six years or more. The majority of PAIE participants (58 per cent) were men. Sixty per cent of the "employers"

> favoured men because they were not responsible for children (Deniger and Provost, 1993) (Shragge and Deniger, 1997:72).

Shragge and Deniger conclude that in terms of the stated goal which was to "reduce the number of people on welfare and get them into jobs", the success of these programs is "marginal at best" and in addition:

> The reform of social assistance in Quebec has not succeeded in saving money. The introduction of workfare programs has created complex benefit scales, and increased the variety of administrative controls. The emphasis on policing recipients...mean that budget expenditures will not be reduced (Shragge and Deniger, 1997:79,80).

New Brunswick

In the early 1990's, New Brunswick Premier Frank McKenna implemented a major workfare program called NB Works targeted at getting social assistance recipients back to work (Mullaly and Weinman, 1994:7). As described by Robert Mullaly :

> NB Works is a work/learnfare project funded and managed by the governments of Canada and New Brunswick with the province in charge of its delivery. It is targeted at persons with less than grade twelve but at least grade seven education, who have been in receipt of social assistance for a minimum of six months and who have dependent children. The project is designed to accept one thousand participants per year for three years and to provide them with education, training and work experience (Mullaly, 1997:35).

Like the Alberta, British Columbia, and Quebec programs the ideological underpinning of NB Works was rooted in individualistic explanations for unemployment and poverty.

Mullaly and Weinman's "A Response to New Brunswick Government's Social Reform Paper "Creating New Options"", criticizes the New Brunswick Government for implementing programs that reflect a "punitive" approach to dealing with the unemployed (Mullaly and Weinman, 1994:6):

> Such cynical, moralistic and punitive views would probably be considered as inciting hatred toward an identifiable group of people if it were any other group in society but poor people. And, as with most acts of discrimination, they are based entirely on myth and stereotype, and fly in the face of all evidence. People do not choose poverty and income assistance as a career goal. There are many thousands of New Brunswickers working at poverty wages who do not leave their jobs. There are thousands of unemployed New Brunswickers who beat the pavement every day in search of a job. People are unemployed by circumstances not by choice...

They argue that the underlying philosophy of NB Works is not a novel concept:

> The sad irony of this whole situation is that New Brunswick was the last province in Canada to repeal its Elizabethan Poor Laws (in 1960), and now appears to be the first province to bring them back... The fact of the matter is that these experiments are not new they too are based on Poor Law practices (ibid.:95-98).

Despite these harsh criticisms Prime Minister, Jean Chretien hailed NB Works as a "model for reforming the (Canadian) social welfare system" (cited in McFarland, Mullaly, 1996: 208). Joan McFarland and Robert Mullaly contrast the popular images of NB Works with the reality, singling out the manner in which the government highlights individual success stories

and opinions of "enthusiastic" participants to deliver a positive message (McFarland, Mullaly, 1996:208). They cite one example found in the NB Works Annual report in 1992-1993:

> I don't like to even think about what would have happened with my life and with my family's life without NB Works. So many positive things have happened to us because of NB Works. I'm going to get my grade 12, my wife's back in school to do with NB Works, everything's coming together. It's been a long time coming. We've had hard times. I don't like to think about where my life would be right now without NB Works because I know it wouldn't be nice. David Nye, NB Works participant and father of two (Cited in McFarland and Mullaly, 1996:208).

McFarland and Mullaly suggest that the "communications strategy" appears to be "deliberately misleading":

> It highlights the successes but appears to operate under a "gag order" on problems and failures. This is possible because the evaluations are controlled by a joint government committee that can (and has) delayed the release of results. We have been told that job placement outcomes may not be made available until after the year 2000. Also, case study data have been collected and analyzed but not released (McFarland, Mullaly, 1996:215).

McFarland and Mullaly demonstrated that the glowing image of NB Works may be manufactured by the Government. Their interviews with NB Works participants revealed many of the frustrations experienced by participants enrolled in this program. For instance, the "promise" that participants in NB Works would not take home less money as participants in the program proved untrue, since they had been placed in low-wage work. They found that in some cases participants were indeed

"worse off financially" (ibid.:210-211). In addition:

> "... many felt that the program had been "hard" on their kids and "hard" on them as mothers. It was "hard" on the family because of the lack of time to spend together, the mother not being able to give the kids enough attention, the mother "racing around in the morning", the mother being tired when she came home and losing her patience and her temper in the evening. One mother described it as "heartbreaking" and another of "going and crying in her room about it". A child's illness was a particularly serious problem. Without a medical certificate, participants were docked money for their absences and in some cases asked to leave the program because of too many such absences (ibid.:212).

Obstacles such as relocation, compounded for those with families were also cited in relation to accessing the skills training component of NB Works (ibid.:21). Criticisms of the adult basic education component were also voiced, since some participants entered the program with only a grade seven education (ibid.: 211). And contrary to Government claims of increases in the self-esteem of participants McFarland and Mullaly found a more "mixed picture":

> Another selling point of NB Works was the effect it would have on participants' self-esteem. Again, we found a mixed picture. Some participants concurred that it did have this effect saying such things as "it gave me a life" or "it was a sort of awakening for me." But one group of participants we spoke with claimed it had caused their self-esteem to "decline by about ninety percent." This occurred because of serious problems they were having in completing certain components of the program (ibid.:212).

Another indicator that contradicts government's claims of success is the fact that by January 1996 67 per cent of

participants had quit the program (ibid.:213). McFarland and Mullaly assert that NB Works was fundamentally flawed and destined to fail from the outset. In their words:

> If success is measured in job placements of participants, a program such as NB Works cannot possibly succeed in an economy with high unemployment. Frank McKenna took a calculated risk when he introduced NB Works in a high unemployment economy. He knew that the successful job placement of program graduates would be all but impossible in these conditions. His stated strategy was to use the trained workforce from NB Works to attract business to the province (Freeman 1993: B8). However, one must question the soundness of this strategy. How can one expect adults with a grade seven education and heavy family responsibilities to carry the burden of the province's economic development (ibid.:215).

"Active" Programs - Practical Policy or simply a"Political Symbol"?

The previous discussion of workfare programs implemented in Alberta, British Columbia, Quebec and New Brunswick has demonstrated the inherent flaws in the active approach to unemployment. Evans argues that active programming, generally termed workfare or learnfare has succeeded more as "an important political symbol" rather than a key to employment (Evans, 1993:63). She cites work conducted by R. Walker in 1991 that indicates:

> The American evidence is clear; workfare works best as an ideology" It responds to a need on the part of politicians and the public to assure themselves that there is no "free lunch"; that the

> expectations imposed on recipients are consistent with mainstream values of self-sufficiency and conceptions of equity (cited in Evans, 1993:63).

Evans cautions that the imposition of the notion of exchange or conditionality on social assistance programs should be avoided because they "define the wrong problem":

> Social programs do need reform, but increasing the work obligations of social assistance recipients is not part of the solution, and only likely to deflect us further from the more important task of tackling the jobs deficit with an active employment strategy that confronts our continuing high level of unemployment in ways that move us beyond training and education to tackle the availability of jobs at decent wages (Evans, 1995: 8,10).

In addition, as explained by Evans, the argument that further training and work incentives will help decrease rates of unemployment and dependence on income support programs is based on assumptions that are "...challenged by the evidence of the current levels of unemployment..." (Evans, 1987:111). Evans suggests that it is the labour market that is in need of major reforms and not the unemployed individuals. Drawing conclusions from her study of social assistance workfare initiatives directed at single mothers, Evans asserts that

> As long as policies attempt to reform women and welfare and ignore reform of work, there can be no employment solution to the social assistance problems of provincial governments (1987:119).

In addition, Evans argues that "given an adequate supply of good jobs and training opportunities, conditional entitlement does not appear to be an issue" (1993:65). She argues that

Canada needs to look to the example of Sweden where there is a "greater commitment to full employment" and subsequently "employment programs result in "real" jobs paid at the going rate, and training leads to mainstream employment" (Evans, 1993:65).

Evidence from both the US, UK and Canada has provided strong evidence that workfare programs are inadequate as a policy response to the crisis of unemployment. As explained by Evans, "U.S. programs have undergone systematic evaluation since the mid-1970's and there is a substantial body of research from studies that used experimental and control groups" (ibid.:55-56). For example, the Manpower Demonstration Research Corporation (MDRC) conducted evaluations of seven programs demonstrated that "they did not move large numbers of individuals off the caseload, make sharp inroads into poverty, or produce sizable savings for taxpayers" (ibid.:60).

As reported in The Economist, in 1996, mounting evidence of failure has even prompted the OECD to concede the inadequacy of the active approach. As explained in The Economist:

> After surveying the results of various broadly based training programmes for unemployed adults, the training friendly OECD was forced to conclude in 1994 that there is "remarkably meagre support for the hypothesis that such programmes are effective" (cited in The Economist, April 6,

1996:19).

In light of this evidence that workfare programs are not successful in getting significant numbers of individuals employment one must question what the government's true motivation for promoting these initiatives is. The admission by the Quebec Government that it expected a "failure rate of 73 per cent" in the Quebec "workfare" programs has prompted the following comment from Shragge and Deniger:

> Our analysis suggests that the explanation lies more in the ways that those excluded from work are being managed by the state than in an attempt to find real solutions for those on Social Aid (1997:68).

In addition,

> Workfare is rooted in a punitive ideology: those who physically can work and who end up on welfare need to be pushed off of it through the discipline of workfare measures. The focus on individuals rather than the broader social and economic problems in effect serves to blame recipients for the wider situation. The policies are a part of a long legacy of *individualizing* the causes of poverty and using punitive measures to reduce the rolls and deter others from applying for benefits (Shragge, 1997:20).

Conclusion

This chapter discussed the importance of applying an objective evaluation method to active programs, in addition, to exploring the link between active income support and

workfare. It was demonstrated that *individualizing* the problem of unemployment through active measures targets the wrong problem and subsequently fails to resolve the problem of unemployment. Specifically, active programs seek to drive the unemployed into the low wage, deregulated labour market. As demonstrated by Evans and others, active programs have only served to provide cheap labour for business and social agencies while failing to address the problem of unemployment. Furthermore it was shown that active programs also detrimentally affect the already existing workforce by displacing them with other workers or trainees.

The next chapter provides an overview of the evolving crises in the Atlantic Fishery which ultimately led to a moratorium on the Northern Cod Fishery.

> The groundfish crisis is the result of numerous factors including: excessive harvesting and processing, uncertain biological stock assessments, and ineffective fisheries management (Government of Canada,FRCC,1997a:1).

Introduction

The objective of this chapter is to provide an overview of the building crisis in the Atlantic Fishery in the late 1980s. In addition, a synopsis of the decisions made since the 1950's by the Government of Canada is incorporated. Attention is also directed to the manner in which the federal government has constructed a dependency argument in relation to those employed in this fishery.

Emerging Crises

In July, 1992, crises, both economic and ecological, in the Northern Cod Fishery, which had been emerging since the early 1980's climaxed with a federally imposed two-year moratorium in zones 2J3KL (See Appendix 2). In a news release on July 2, 1992, the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans, John Crosbie, announced that emergency assistance payments of $225 a week would be dispersed to some of those displaced by the moratorium over the next ten weeks (Government of Canada,DFO, 1992a). Many of those involved in the industry were outraged at the inadequacy of this aid program. In particular, concern

was expressed regarding the low level of benefits, which were described as both "inadequate and insulting" (Steele, 1992:36):

> Fishers and fish plant processing workers, together with their union leaders, immediately expressed strong negative reaction to the terms of the announcement. In seven days their government would bar them from their livelihoods and well-being. Careers, families, homes and mortgages, businesses and entire communities were suddenly in grave danger (ibid.:36).

The provincial government in Newfoundland supported this view labelling the aid program as "hardly more than welfare" (Government of Newfoundland,DFO,1992a). This reaction prompted "detailed discussions" between the Fish, Food and Allied Workers union (FFAW), the Provincial Government and the Federal Government which resulted in the development of the Northern Cod Adjustment Recovery Program (NCARP) which was fully implemented by August 1, 1992, and later replaced in May 1994, with The Atlantic Groundfish Strategy (Government of Canada,DFO,1992b). The rationale for the NCARP program was outlined in a speech delivered by John Crosbie on July 17, 1992:

> Work on the income support element of the Northern Cod recovery plan has been completed. Accordingly, I am announcing today income support payments for the duration of the moratorium to replace the emergency assistance payments of $225 per week. The measures that I am announcing today were developed following consultations with the Newfoundland Fishermen, Food and Allied Workers Union. Work on other elements of the Northern Cod

> recovery plan is continuing with the union, processors and the Government of Newfoundland and Labrador (ibid.).

The collapse of the Atlantic Fisheries has negatively impacted on all Atlantic Provinces and parts of Quebec, but nowhere has the impact been greater than in Newfoundland where Northern Cod is the primary species harvested (Government of Canada,DFO,1993d:19) (See Appendix 3). In 1992, around 20,000 Newfoundlanders qualified for NCARP benefits. With other Atlantic fisheries closing in 1993 a total of around 35,000 individuals were displaced from the industry, although only 28,000 qualified for benefits (Overton, 1997: 2). On August 31, 1993, Ross Reid, Minister of Fisheries and Oceans announced further closures in the Atlantic Fishery:

> Five fisheries will close effective today, including those for cod stocks on the eastern scotian shelf, in the southern Gulf of St. Lawrence and Sydney Bight, and off the south coast of Newfoundland (Government of Canada,DFO,1993c).

In a 1989 provincial fisheries report the historical importance of the Northern Cod to the province of Newfoundland was clearly documented as follows:

> For the past century enormous cod landings have dominated the Newfoundland fishery, in some years peaking at 300,000 tonnes. This special dependence on Northern cod has been a recurrent theme in Newfoundland history. For almost a century before confederation with Canada, Northern Cod was fished exclusively from Newfoundland. No other part of Canada can make such a claim of continuous and unbroken use of Northern cod (Government of

Newfoundland,DFO,1989:23).

Once Newfoundland joined Canada in 1949 exclusive responsibility for all offshore fisheries was relinquished to the powers of the federal government. The legacy of the federal fisheries management approach constitutes the focus of a study titled "The Managed Commercial Annihilation of Northern Cod" by Steele, Andersen and Green. This study traces out Department of Fisheries and Oceans (DFO) decisions from the 1950's through to the 1990's. They argue that these decisions have contributed to mismanagement of the stock and the ensuing crises. Steele et al. also infer that many of the DFO's decisions were even contrary to the established management plans of the DFO:

> It is apparent that the policies enunciated by DFO and expressed in the Groundfish Management Plans have been only words on paper to be ignored or disregarded at will. Although fishing at F0.1 or less has been the declared policy since 1977, this policy was never actually followed (Steele et al., 1992:66).

They concluded that the procedures followed by DFO were an example of "poor science", a case where scientists attempted to "rationalize" the declining stocks rather than apply scientific experimental method to the problem (ibid.:65). Furthermore, year after year from 1969, through to 1992, declines were evident, yet DFO ignored its own scientific model and "rationalized" that other factors were

responsible for the temporary disappearance of the stock and forged ahead with TAC's that would eventually "annihilate" the stock (ibid.). Technological advancements in fishing techniques coupled with increased foreign ships fishing for northern cod in the 1960's and 1970's have also been identified as wreaking havoc on the stock:

> Foreign fishing fleets had always been present off Canada's East coast. By the 1960's, however, European nations had greatly increased their fishing efforts. By the early 1970's, the northern cod stock was so badly overfished that Canada extended its marine boundary from 12 miles to 200 miles in 1977 (Government of Canada,HRD,1993f:15).

The issue of responsibility for the stock crisis remains a point of debate. A 1997 report prepared for the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans, by The Fisheries Resource Conservation Council (FRCC) elaborates on the issue of responsibility:

> We must address the failures and the abuses that led to this path of destruction: over-estimation of the bio-mass; over-estimation of recruitment; failure to recognize environmental changes and their impact on the groundfish fishery; failure of the management system to recognize the impact of technological change; under-estimation of foreign overfishing; pressures of our own Canadian industry which led to misreporting, dumping, discarding, and high-grading; and, failure of the political system to make the necessary conservation decisions when the red flags did go up. Recent history demonstrates that, collectively, we failed at managing and preserving the resource...The fishery crisis cannot be related to a single cause or blamed on a single group: it is the failure of our whole fisheries system (Government of Canada,FRCC, 1997a:1).

The crises in the fishery and the subsequent mass displacement of workers is generally characterized by the federal government as a problem stemming from the individuals involved in the crisis. Specifically, an excessively large workforce dependent on an overly generous U.I program is blamed for the dependency problem. But this argument is contradicted even by the federal government's own fishery studies. For instance, the 1990 federally commissioned Dunne Task Force lends support to mismanagement claims. In fact this Task Force:

> ...frankly acknowledged that policy positions developed for the management of northern cod in the early 1980's "gradually eroded, so that by the latter half of the 1980's the policy basis for management of this stock was very unclear" (cited in Steele et al., 1992:54).

The Steele study suggests that the current crisis is the result of the federal government overlooking recommendations for conservation measures from even their own 1982 Kirby task force. As well, some observers go so far as to argue that the Minister of Fisheries may have been negligent in his analysis of the scientific facts imparted in the Kirby report, thus resulting in poor decision making. Steele et al. assert that the Minister of Fisheries may have misread the scientific facts:

> Unfortunately, it appears that the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans believed that the stock was being managed at the conservative F0.1 level when the actual F was two or three times that level.

> The effect on the stock has been catastrophic (1992:48).

But despite the documented evidence of federal mismanagement the federal government has persistently constructed the crises in the fishery as one of over-fishing caused by overcapacity and UI dependency. Dominating federal thinking since the 1980's, is the argument that the fishing workforce is excessively large and is driven by a dependency on the industry as a means to accessing the Unemployment Insurance system (UI). Often the problem is summarized in terms of "too many people chasing too few fish". Specifically, DFO estimations calculate overcapacity at around fifty per cent in both the harvesting and processing sectors of the industry (Government of Canada,DFO,1993d:57). Federally commissioned studies which examined the economic problems in the Atlantic Fishery since the early 1980's have consistently made this claim. The FFAW, the provincial government, and displaced workers however, maintain that the crisis in this industry originated with federal mismanagement of the stock. Some critics have argued that it is the responsibility of the provincial government to question the argument that there are "too many chasing too few fish" rather than simply accept the argument as conventional wisdom. Newfoundland's main newspaper, the Evening Telegram, for example, called for the provincial government to challenge the federal government on

the issue:

> If there are indeed "too few fish", then his [Premier Clyde Wells] job is to ask why this is so, and then see how the stocks can be restored to their former abundance. This may mean that he has to take on the federal government; so be it. He may have to start agitating to drive the foreigners off the continental shelf; so be it (Evening Telegram, June 1, 1989:4).

The Evolution of the Dependency Argument

A convenient starting point for this discussion is the economic crisis of the early 1980's. In January, 1982, Prime Minister, Pierre Trudeau designated "prominent civil servant", Michael Kirby to chair a Task Force investigation into the economic problems in the Atlantic Fishery (Decks Awash, vol. 12, 1983:4). Conservation measures in conjunction with a major reduction of the fishery workforce constituted the main conclusions of Kirby's final report, titled "Navigating Troubled Waters: A New Policy for the Atlantic Fisheries". Kirby's report called for a reduced and more self-reliant workforce which could actually make a "reasonable income" and not merely eke out an existence. In addition, he argued that the industry should aim to "survive downturns with only a normal business failure rate and without government assistance":

> Employment in the Atlantic fishing industry should be maximized subject to the constraint that those

> employed receive a reasonable income as a result of fishery - related activities, including fishery-related income transfer payments (ibid.).

Making the Fishery a viable industry was the goal. The implications of Kirby's statements were clear, a "social fishery" was encouraging mismanagement of the stocks, discouraging a reduction in the workforce size, while fostering dependency on the UI system. The term "social fishery" referred to a fishery operating under the influence of the Newfoundland Provincial Government in response to pressure from harvesters and processors to maintain employment in the region. But, contrary to the federal government's desire to implement Kirby's recommendations to suspend subsidization it actually expanded its commitment in this area, supplying the industry with $145 - million dollars in September of that year (Harris, 1983:10). The obvious question that arises is; why this seeming contradiction between theory and policy within the federal approach to the Atlantic Fishery? Some, like journalist Michael Harris, argued at the time that the federal government was obliged to subvert its plans due to pressure from the "vortex of competing interests" in the fishing industry. In Harris' view it was these "competing interests" that circumvented the Kirby task force recommendations:

> From the beginning of the Kirby Commission's work, there were powerful interests in the fishery opposed to the commitment to fundamental change

> represented by the task force. Owners of financially troubled companies, provincial governments, fishermen's organizations and significantly the federal fisheries department felt threatened by shifts in power and principle that appeared to be on the way (Harris,, Nov. 7, 1983).

The Newfoundland provincial government headed by Tory, Brian Peckford, argued that the "raw economic" approach favoured by Kirby would kill rural Newfoundland and called for an "all plants open" policy (Harris, 1983:10). As explained by Overton:

> the restructuring of the industry along the lines suggested by Kirby involved political problems, not the least of which was the question of what would happen to those fishery workers displaced from the industry as a result of the rationalization of the industry. This problem was to be exacerbated by the fact that Brian Peckford, the Newfoundland premier, was on record as supporting an approach to the fishery that would maximize employment (Overton, May 14, 1997: 6).

In essence, it appears that it was not politically acceptable in the 1980's to reduce the workforce or to discontinue subsidizing the industry. Considering the opposition, to do so would be political suicide, a subtle game plan would be demanded if the federal government was to successfully implement its agenda. By September, 1983, two fish processing companies, National Sea and Fisheries Products International(FPI) were formed as a result of a fisheries restructuring agreement between the Government of Newfoundland and the Government of Canada (Memorial University, 1983). The development of these companies amounted to a privatization

agenda. This agenda was not covert, all involved were cognizant of it, as illustrated in the statement by provincial Liberal MHA, Walter Carter:

> FPI arose from the ashes only because hundreds of millions of government dollars were pumped into the operation, and the mandate given at that time was to run the company on the basis of good business practice with the aim being for the company to be eventually taken over by private enterprise (Evening Telegram,27 1985:6).

By the early 1980's it was the established viewpoint of the federal government that privatization of the industry was crucial to ensuring that the industry would become "self-supporting", and viable (Overton, 1997:1). Once transformed into a "self-supporting" industry, which basically means without government subsidies, the federal government believed it could divest itself of its financial and political responsibilities. Overton explains that the notion of being viable came to be associated with the concept of industry "sustainability" and is furthermore directly linked to the issue of privatization (Overton, 1997: 4,5). This concept, as Overton infers, is not fully explained by government, yet it is commonly utilized to rationalize the restructuring of the industry (Overton, 1997:1). The Newfoundland Economic Recovery Commission for instance pronounced in 1992, that this very issue of "sustainability" was central to the crisis in the fishery. The ERC explained that:

> We have glaring evidence of the impact of an

> unsustainable, non-integrated approach to development - the state of our fisheries and the dependence of its workers upon government support programs such as UI, NCARP and TAGS (Government of Newfoundland,ERC,1994b:4).

So while the creation of FPI appeared to be in diametric opposition to the federal government's true goals, Overton reveals the strategy at play:

> the main purpose of state control was to prepare the company for privatization. A leaner, meaner company would eventually be handed back to the private sector (Overton, 1997: 7).

FPI did indeed become economically viable and was privatized in 1987, unfortunately a stock depletion crisis escalated, resulting in drastically reduced northern cod catches in the mid to late 1980's.

By 1986, for example, the Economic Council of Canada had concluded as a result of declining catches that many full-time fishermen in Newfoundland were actually living in poverty (Evening Telegram, Dec. 3, 1987:6). In this same year the Newfoundland, Royal commission on Employment and Unemployment headed by Sociologist, Dr. Douglas House, concluded that:

> While the unemployment insurance system was established mainly to provide a mechanism to tide people over until they found a new job, it does not serve that function in Newfoundland and Labrador. Dependence on unemployment insurance is extensive in Newfoundland families and communities. Unemployment insurance is more of an income subsidy; it is embedded into family and community economies and the local way of life (Government of Newfoundland, 1986:49).

Despite acknowledging the declining inshore catch rates

it was in this year also that the federal government allowed the use of Factory Freezer Trawlers (FFTs). Subsequently, the challenges inshore fishery workers faced were further intensified. The FFAW, the provincial government and fishery workers criticized DFO for granting National Sea Products a licence to operate a FFT. This decision angered many inshore fishery workers who feared the detrimental effects of such a decision on their livelihoods (Newfoundland Herald, January 11, 1986:16). The federal government had until this time rejected the use of FFT's supporting Newfoundland's "claim that they would result in destruction of many communities" (ibid). Earl McCurdy, secretary-treasurer of the FFAW at the time, voiced concerns claiming that:

> ...one FFT is worth 350 to 400 jobs in onshore plants with each trawler employing 130 people. Women in particular would be hit hard by the introduction of FFT's says McCurdy. They make up over half the workforce in the plants, and most won't be able to work on the boats because they have families (ibid.:18).

In addition, the Newfoundland Inshore Fisheries Association (NIFA) co-chaired by fisherman Tom Best cautioned Fisheries Minister Tom Siddon that 1987 would be"another disastrous year for the inshore sector" if "significant restrictions" were not imposed on the offshore fishery (Evening Telegram, December 20, 1986:3). As well:

> A disastrous fishing season on the Northern Peninsula and Southern Labrador left many men either without enough work-weeks to qualify for

> unemployment insurance benefits or with such paltry earnings that what benefits they do receive are at the bottom of the scale...only a quarter of the quotas set for the area were landed this season (Westcott, 1988:6).

Despite growing evidence of declining catches, plant closures and the obvious destruction of the inshore fishery by FFTs the 1987 Alverson study claimed the stock was "growing steadily" (Steele, 1992:50). In 1987 the Alverson study of the Northern Cod Stock, as reported by the Evening Telegram, also chose to support the "overcapacity" - UI dependency argument in explaining the economic crisis in the industry (Evening Telegram, Dec. 3, 1987:6). This study also concluded that while conservation measures were necessary the stock was indeed thriving (Steele et al., 1992:50). Steele et al. express astonishment at this conclusion:

> It is astonishing that at this late date DFO was still advising TAC's based on the projected FO.1s when it had been repeatedly documented that actual fishing mortalities had greatly exceeded the projected fishing mortality. Great emphasis was placed in all these deliberations on the stock was rebuilding and not in imminent danger of collapse. However, failures to achieve projected rates of increase or the target critical spawning stock biomass were not discussed (ibid.:51).

Both the Provincial Government of Newfoundland and the FFAW appealed to the federal government to address the role of foreign overfishing in the growing crisis in the fishery. Premier Brian Peckford called for action:

> As time goes on it's going to get more difficult for the Canadian government to maintain its present

> position of being moderate. It's time to move to a more radical position which is really a realistic position...It is time for the federal government to say No more! We have played the good soldier in diplomatic relations and it's now time to take the Europeans on (Payne, Walsh, December 13, 1988:8).

The FFAW argued that:

> The decision by the EC to take almost 158,000 tonnes of fish again next year outside Canada's 200-mile limit flies in the face of all management principles and conservation efforts... (ibid.).

In response to these pleas to curb foreign overfishing John Crosbie, Minister of International Trade at the time labelled them "unrealistic":

> You can't extend (the 200-mile limit) unless the rest of the world agrees with you, unless you're prepared to back up your actions by force. The 200-mile economic zone is what most countries of the world, after years of negotiations, agreed should be recognized in international law...(Sunday Express,1988:8)

Mr. Crosbie did acknowledge that the willingness of foreign ships to take "12 times" their allotted quota constitutes a "cavalier treatment of the stocks" and is "outrageous" (ibid.). While the federal government forged ahead with Total Allowable Catches (TACs) which ignored the advice of its own studies the stock crisis escalated resulting in what Crosbie came to term a "national disaster" (Walsh, 1989:1). That national disaster resulted in layoffs and financial hardship in Newfoundland:

> Data collected in recent weeks by union fieldworkers and opposition politicians shows that "thousands" of small boat fishermen and plant

> workers...have failed to earn sufficient stamps to qualify for unemployment insurance this winter (Strowbridge, September 3, 1989:8)
>
> Burgeo- Five hundred National Sea Product's employees in this south coast community were laid off Thursday for the remainder of this year and prospects for next year aren't bright (Evening Telegram, September 15, 1989:8).

Forced to Face Reality

By 1989 "the situation of the fish stocks had dramatically worsened" and as Overton states "few could avoid the conclusion that there was a major crisis brewing" (1997:10). Declining groundfish catches as documented in the Newfoundland 1992/1993 Provincial Annual Fisheries Report demonstrates that there was statistical evidence since 1989 that a crisis was indeed "brewing".

Comparative Landings (tonnes) of 2J3KL Cod

	1988	1989	1990	1991	1992
2J3KL cod	**213,719**	**187,707**	**180,944**	**117,450**	**18,155**

(Source: Government of Newfoundland, 1993b:5)

Only two years after the Alverson study had concluded that the stock was thriving, major reductions in catches caused difficulty resulting in plant closures and companies forced into bankruptcy (Sinclair, 1990:5). The "brewing" crisis prompted DFO to set up a review panel, chaired by Dr. Leslie Harris to study the crisis in the fishery. The Harris preliminary report issued in May 1989, concluded that DFO's estimation of the fishing mortality level had been inaccurate and therefore the TACs should be reduced to 190,000 metric tons (Steele et al., 1992:52). But as argued by Steele et al. this level would be 65,000 metric tons above the policy level they had implemented in 1977 (ibid.:51). The final Harris Report was submitted to the Minister of Fisheries in 1990. This report concluded that the TACs should be reduced in an effort to help the stock rebuild (ibid.:53). The federally commissioned Harris study predicted "commercial extinction of the cod in six years if no action were forthcoming" (quoted in

Overton, 1997:10). According to Steele et al. the minister "accepted in principle most of the recommendations contained in the report but rejected the suggested TAC and the reduction in F (1992:53).

In keeping with the "overcapacity" argument that dominated federal thinking, Crosbie saw these continuing layoffs as an "obvious" result of an excessively large workforce (Westcott, 1989:3). Furthermore, Crosbie consistent with the social policy reforms of the day announced an emergency aid package that incorporated an active training component:

> ... displaced workers...will be provided with income support, employment counselling, retraining and retirement benefits, community support and measures to create alternative job opportunities...(ibid.).

By 1992, the Canadian Atlantic Fisheries Scientific Advisory Committee (CAFSAC) was warning that the stock was in severe trouble advising reduced TACS and stating also that "prospects for stock building are not optimistic" (Steele et al., 1992: 54, 55). At this point in the crisis, rejection of the advice was no longer an option for the federal government and so a two year moratorium on northern cod was announced (ibid.:56).

Conclusion

This chapter has shown that responsibility for the crisis in the Atlantic Fishery is seen by the Federal Government and the displaced fishery workers from divergent points of view. This chapter has shown that a consensus between the federal government and the displaced workers (as well as the Newfoundland Government) regarding responsibility for the crises did not exist. The federal government has generally attributed the crisis to an "overcapacity" problem caused by an overdependency on the UI program. This chapter has also provided an overview of the displaced workers' counter argument - that claims that the crisis in the Atlantic Fishery is the direct result of federal mismanagement of the fish stock. As demonstrated by Steele et al., Overton, the Federal Government has for many years implemented decisions and policies that may be seen as direct contributors to the current crisis.

The next chapter provides an outline of the NCARP and Improving Our Odds programs.

> NCARP had a number of objectives to be sure, it sought to attenuate the sting of economic misfortune resulting from the two year moratorium on Northern Cod by providing a stable source of income. But the program had other objectives. It sought to downsize the fishery of the future... It is for this reason that the [Minister of Fisheries] also announced a series of adjustment measures including training (Savoi, 1994:6).

Introduction

The objective of this chapter is twofold; first to describe the main components of the Northern Cod Adjustment Recovery Program (NCARP), as well as sketching out something of the process by which it was formulated. The second part will provide concrete examples of how the concept of active

income support or a "self-help" philosophy was translated into action in NCARP. This will be accomplished through an in depth description of Improving Our Odds, an NCARP employment counselling program delivered in 1994. Discussion will focus on the HRD rationale for the development of this program, as well as an overview of the design, content and implementation of the Improving Our Odds program.

NCARP

With the moratorium announcement on July 2, 1992, came the promise of temporary financial assistance for some of those displaced from the fishing industry, with the additional reassurance that a more comprehensive income support package would be announced in ten weeks (Government of Canada,DFO,1992a). But due to massive public pressure from the Newfoundland Government, the FFAW and displaced fishery workers, a program called the Northern Cod Adjustment Recovery Program (NCARP) was implemented by August 1, 1992:

> On July 2, 1992, Fisheries Minister John Crosbie announced an immediate two year moratorium on fishing of the Northern Cod in fishing zones off the coast of Newfoundland. At that time, it was estimated that one in every eleven Newfoundlanders was either a fisherperson or fish plant worker. Individuals who were affected by this decree were promised compensation in the amount of $225.00 per week for the next ten weeks. Against this backdrop of public criticism, this emergency assistance program was quickly modified. On August 1, 1992, the Minister of Fisheries announced an income

> support program involving payments of [up to] $406.00 per week to those who were affected by the moratorium and not in receipt of Unemployment Insurance benefits (Hardy-Cox, Hawkins, 1993:3).

NCARP, as explained in a federal news release on July 17, 1992, by the Minister of Fisheries, John Crosbie, would incorporate both an income support component and what was termed an "adjustment" component. Crosbie emphasized that the maintenance of maximum payments of $406 per week was conditional upon participation in some form of specified activity:

> Between August 1 and December 31, 1992, fishermen and plant workers will have the opportunity to choose among a variety of alternative skills development programs... Those who opt into these programs will continue to receive the full income replacement payments up to the maximum $406.00 per week throughout the northern cod moratorium to the spring of 1994. Eligible individuals who choose not to enter one of these programs by the end of the year will revert to basic payments of $225 a week for the remainder of the moratorium period (Government of Canada,DFO,1992b).

Delivering the NCARP options and benefits details to clients was seen as crucial to the process of both determining the level of interest in adjustment and encouraging that adjustment. The fact that NCARP clients were widely scattered throughout Newfoundland and Labrador was viewed by HRD as an obstacle to this process. As reported in the Evening Telegram (See Appendix 4):

> Bob O'Neill of the St. John's EIC office said the

> task of finding out what choices fishermen and plant workers want to make is compounded by the fact they are scattered across 320 communities throughout the Island and Labrador. Using people who are already located in the communities makes the job a lot easier, he said (Evening Telegram, Sept. 26, 1992:1).

As a result of consultation with the FFAW, HRD agreed to provide funding to the FFAW to train around one hundred of its members, including some of whom were NCARP clients to conduct forums in an effort to "clarify" the options (ibid). As explained by Earle McCurdy, President of the FFAW:

> We felt that the best equipped people to tackle such a job was the local leadership that has developed over the years among the fishermen and the plant workers. McCurdy said such people already have the respect of their peers and would probably be more effective in communicating with them (ibid.).

In addition, HRD stated that "using people who are already located in the communities makes the job a lot easier..." (Ibid.). These "instructors" conducted around 2,000 information sessions throughout the province, funded through a two million dollar contract awarded to the FFAW through HRD. As explained by the

Evening Telegram:

> The fishermen's union has joined the federal government in helping fishermen and plant workers figure out how to weather the northern cod crisis. The Fishermen, Food and Allied workers union said Friday it will send over 100 of its members across

> the province to brief fishermen and plant workers on the options open to them under the northern cod compensation package, and to collect information on their needs. The "instructors" as they are being called, were trained as part of a $2 million contract the union negotiated with Employment and Immigration Canada to cover the cost of the project (ibid.).

From the outset of the moratorium the FFAW articulated its strong interest in providing NCARP counselling and providing Basic Education. In an interview Earle McCurdy explained that the FFAW had been involved in the provision of Adult Basic Education to its members prior to the moratorium and therefore believed they were able to provide the appropriate resources and support for NCARP clients (McCurdy Interview, Sept. 7, 1996). Overton offers a more detailed account of the FFAW's involvement in the delivery and promotion of the active adjustment component of the NCARP program. In 1991, federal funding had allowed the FFAW to found four literacy centres which employed a computerized system of instruction called Plato, imported from the United States (Overton, 1997:11). Overton states that the FFAW's involvement in the delivery of ABE was consistent with the growing participation of labour organizations across Canada in the delivery of training resulting from federal funding initiatives. Overton elaborates:[3]

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[3]See Hoddinott and Overton in The Training Trap, ed. Dunk,McBride, Nelson, 1996

> With the 1992 moratorium, the union became heavily involved in directly delivering government-financed basic education to many of its members under the NCARP and later TAGS programs. By late 1992 the FFAW was claiming that it was operating "the biggest high school in Newfoundland." This was because, to provide education under the NCARP package, another 12 education centres were being established. At the end of 1992, it was claimed that approximately 1,800 fishers and plant workers were enrolled in "computer awareness programs." What this meant was that workers with a minimum of Grade 4 were attempting to upgrade their education using the Plato system of instruction available at the FFAW literacy centres (Overton, 1997: 11).

In February 1993, an NCARP options information booklet, dubbed "the bible" by the Evening Telegram was distributed to all potential qualifiers of NCARP as an additional resource for NCARP clients to utilize in making their option decision.(Cleary, February 13, 1993:1). "The bible", a joint publication of the FFAW, the Government of Canada and the Newfoundland Provincial Government outlined the benefit levels and provided specific information regarding available training options. The options were listed as follows:

1. Training for work inside the fishery;
2. Training for work outside the fishery;
3. Work/UI;
4. Early Retirement;
5. Income Replacement Benefit Rate of $225 per week (Government of Canada, 1993a1:iii)

NCARP clients were informed in this options information booklet that an NCARP information video was available from DFO. As well, they were provided with a toll-free help-line number (ibid.:iv). Equipped with these resources NCARP

clients were expected to become informed and then choose an option.

From the outset the federal government and the FFAW underscored the need for the displaced workers to enrol in option number two; adjustment training, that is work outside the fishery. Specifically:

> Priority will be given to basic education upgrading and courses that offer skills which are transferable to other industries (ibid.:4).

Their aim in this was to reduce the workforce in the fishery by at least fifty per cent. This message was made clear by John Crosbie:

> Our objective is to achieve real adjustment in the fishery... I am convinced that the options now available are fair and generous to fishery workers who have been affected by the sudden decline in northern cod stocks which have made this moratorium necessary. Governments, industry and fishery workers must now work together to strike a better balance between the resources available for harvesting and the number of people who depend on them (Government of Canada,DFO,1993a).

This goal was also conveyed in the Foreword of the NCARP Options and Information Booklet:

> As we begin our efforts to develop an economically viable, ecologically sustainable "fishery of the future", NCARP will also assist Northern cod fishery workers adjust to the future of this industry. Once the moratorium ends, the fishery will be faced with reduced quotas and fewer participants will be required in both the harvesting and processing sectors. Conservation measures necessary to protect and rebuild fish stocks, and balance harvesting capacity with the limits of a rebuilt resource, will affect the lives of great number of Newfoundland and Labradorians.

> Reducing harvesting capacity means there must be fewer licensed fisherpersons. Conservation measures also mean there will be fewer fish to process, thereby reducing the need for the current number of plants and plant workers. Adjustment measures provided under NCARP such as early individual retirement for older workers, groundfish licence retirement and retraining provides various opportunities for those of you affected by this decline in the Northern cod stock. In essence you are being offered an opportunity to adjust to the future reality of this resource. You should reflect on the implications this downsizing of the industry will have upon you as a Northern cod fishery worker. (Government of Canada,DFO,1993b: i).

In a news release on August 31, 1993, Ross Reid, Minister of Fisheries, and Bernard Valcourt, Minister of Human Resources and Labour, announced the closure of additional Atlantic Fisheries (Government of Canada,DFO,1993c). Valcourt, consistent with government's established active philosophy emphasized the necessity for adjustment training:

> This is a major adjustment challenge affecting all of Atlantic Canada. The short-term measures I am announcing today are an important first step in finding long-term solutions for the region. This can only be achieved by providing individuals with the training and additional skills needed to seek out new opportunities (ibid.).

Despite Government's efforts to promote adjustment training there was an increasing perception at the federal level that NCARP clients were resistant to adjustment. In an effort to determine the option preferences of NCARP clients a survey was conducted at the beginning of the moratorium:

At the onset of the moratorium, in the summer of

> 1992, NCARP clients were surveyed and profiled. This profile included their current educational level and, as well, the selected option from one of the five offered by the Department of Fisheries and Oceans (DFO) to those designated eligible under NCARP. These five options included retirement, work/UI, standard income replacement, training inside the fishery, and training outside the fishery. Two of the five options, training inside or outside the fishery, were choices that had a direct impact on the development of appropriate responses by HRD (Government of Canada,HRD,1994d: 2).

Initially, it was anticipated that the results of these participant profiles would be available by January, 1993, but a slow rate of response delayed the results until April 1993.

> The initial survey revealed that a large number of clients had not completed high school; yet, from the options available, only a relatively small number chose to enrol in Adult Basic Education (ABE), the provincially approved program for adult high school completion. HRD was concerned that more people were not availing of the opportunity to upgrade their basic education or to seek alternative employment or a career change. A majority was waiting for an opportunity to participate in training programs -- more specifically for training <u>inside</u> the industry, which indicated that a customized strategy was necessary to meet the needs of many clients who anticipated that the moratorium would be short-lived (ibid.:2).

The survey results prompted HRD and industry officials to acknowledge that "something must be done" to encourage adjustment (Government of Canada,HRD,1994b: 3,4). It was HRD's position that training within the failing industry was "questionable" and "impractical":

> The survey of NCARP clients showed that most had less than a high school education, and a majority

> were waiting for an opportunity to participate in training programs--more specifically for training inside the industry, which indicated that a customized approach was necessary to meet the needs of many clients. With the future of the fishery questionable, the need for some form of training inside the industry was pressing; however, with no end in sight for the moratorium, its practicality was becoming less evident (ibid.: 2,3).

The federal fisheries minister Ross Reid also emphasized the urgency of accepting adjustment:

> I am deeply concerned about (their) future...Even when fish stocks have rebuilt, we will need fewer people to carry on the fishery. That is inevitable. We must accept that, but we must also do all we can to create new opportunities for people and communities (Evening Telegram, July 12, 1993:4).

Stating similar concerns, HRD organized a number of community forums in an effort to determine what approach should be taken to ensure that the displaced workers would consider new careers (Government of Canada,HRD,1994b: 2):

> The development team, under the direction of the NCARP Director, included adult educators, employment counsellors, and others who understood the dilemma experienced by clients who had difficulty making decisions because of the uncertainty of the future of the fishery. Using findings from province-wide consultations with fishers and community leaders interested in their plight and that of their communities, the team realized that providing a forum for fishers to discuss their lives and livelihoods was essential (Government of Canada,HRD,1994d:4).

As a result of these forums HRD concluded that a group employment counselling approach would facilitate the adjustment process. Basically, HRD identified a:

> ... need for an approach which would allow fishers to come together and discuss factors affecting their lives, their industry, their communities, and their career options. Central to any strategy was a need for fishers to identify any barriers which might be hindering any move toward a career change or their involvement in education and training. (Government of Canada,HRD,1994b:3).

Specifically, HRD concluded that a "customized strategy" was critical in aiding displaced fishery workers to "identify any barriers" which were acting as deterrents to "career change":

> Human Resources Development (HRD) and the industry recognise that fishers must have the opportunity to talk about their industry situation and arrive at some personal and collective decisions as to how they and their communities can improve our odds (ibid.:2).

From this statement it may be deduced that there was a pre-conceived notion that those who chose training inside the fishery as their favoured option were ill-advised, and uninformed and in need of guidance.

Creating Improving Our Odds

> I.O.O. is a chance to learn in an informal environment more about your own situation... I.O.O provides an oportunity to learn... Learning builds opportunity (Government of Canada,HRD,1994a)

At this time HRD contracted the services of Dr. Joan Whelan, owner of Health and Educational Services, a private consulting firm, and owner of a private ABE college, to design Improving Our Odds (I.O.O.). As explained by Whelan, she based the I.O.O. program on a "holistic" philosophy. In an

interview,she explained that in her view employment counselling cannot be separated from personal counselling (Whelan interview, December 5, 1996). Working from this perspective, Whelan argued that a "holistic" strategy was requisite to "establishing readiness" for adjustment amongst NCARP clients. Whelan elaborates on this view in her I.O.O. evaluation report:

> The theoretical base for this employment counselling strategy was derived from the works of Norman Amundson (1984, 1989). He developed a model which considers the psychological, social, and economic factors and is consistent with a perception that work is just one part of a total lifestyle. From this accepted theoretical base, Improving Our Odds was designed as a holistic response strategy to provide the needed learning environment to establish readiness (Government of Canada,HRD,1994d:6)

"Establishing readiness" for adjustment out of the fishing industry was the principle objective in the designing of the I.O.O. program. As explained by Whelan, there were grave concerns within HRD that NCARP clients were indicating a disinterest in the adjustment option and therefore a disinclination to exit the industry:

> HRD was concerned that more people were not availing of the opportunity to upgrade their basic education or to seek alternative employment or a career change. A majority was waiting for an opportunity to participate in training programs--more specifically for training <u>inside</u> the industry, which indicated that a customized strategy was necessary to meet the needs of many clients who anticipated that the moratorium would be short-

lived (ibid.:2).

Using this holistic approach, according to Whelan, I.O.O. was designed in a manner which was "customized" to elicit "appropriate" and "relevant" responses from the displaced fishery workers (ibid.:2,3). Working from this perspective it was hoped that I.O.O. would first help NCARP clients to be "ready" emotionally for the transition from their lifestyle and cultural attachments to the fishery. Thus, they would then be "ready" to train for new careers outside the industry.

Basically, I.O.O. was devised as a tool to elicit what HRD viewed as "appropriate" and "relevant" responses to their displacement, in contrast to the misguided choices revealed in the NCARP survey. Specifically, I.O.O. was devised as a tool to persuade displaced workers to accept the adjustment option. In an evaluative report of I.O.O. prepared for HRD, by Health and Educational Services the concept of a holistic counselling process is explained as follows. As a result of consultation with Dr. Whelan, HRD concurred that I.O.O. would provide:

> fisherpersons and plant workers with the opportunity, in a relaxed, non-institutional setting, to think and talk, in a meaningful way, about their livelihood (Cleary, Jan. 15, 1994:1).

In addition, HRD hoped that I.O.O. would "open the minds of people to all kinds of opportunities" (ibid.). According to

Whelan, I.O.O. was the appropriate tool to facilitate the process of acceptance, "readiness" and adjustment (Whelan Interview, Dec.5, 1996). Furthermore, the goal of I.O.O was to heighten fishers' "self-awareness and consider their role in shaping the future of the fishery and their communities" (Government of Canada, 1994a2: 7). Specifically, the purpose, goals and learning objectives of I.O.O. were described in these terms:

Purpose

> Improving Our Odds is a learning opportunity designed in response to fishers' stated needs to have more information and skills that would enable them to make appropriate decisions and take action about their lives and livelihoods.

Goal

> Within the allocated time frame of the Improving Our Odds strategy, fishers will increase their self-awareness and consider their role in shaping the future of the fishery and their communities.

Learning Objectives

1. To increase their (fishers') knowledge of their place in the fishery and determine their role in its renewal.

2. To recognize the need for individual and collective participation in the process of community development.

3. To discuss the process of community development.

4 To explore methods and approaches to support the viability and vitality of rural communities, Incorporating this "customized" learning resource

package.

5. To recognize the knowledge and skills that are required to secure and maintain employment in today's labour force.

6. To identify individual knowledge and skills that are transferable to future work...

7. To initiate a plan or review the plan made for the future (ibid.: 7,8).

With the purpose, goal and learning objectives defined, Whelan proceeded to develop a three stage model for the implementation of the program. The first stage involved the briefing of 18 trainers in the philosophy, goals and learning objectives of the program. In the second stage trainers were dispersed throughout Newfoundland and Labrador to supervise thirteen facilitator training workshops attended by 200 facilitators. It should be noted that HRD subcontracted the facilitator selection, training and actual delivery of I.O.O. out to both public and private colleges (ibid.:15). The delivery of I.O.O. was the third stage of the process (ibid.:5).

HRD commissioned the services of Memorial University's Centre for Distance Career Counselling, headed by Professor, Mildred Cahill, to create a "customized" learning resource package which could aid facilitators to implement the I.O.O. strategy (Government of Canada,HRD,1994b: 4). This Centre, as explained by HRD, is equipped with the "technological capacity to provide a range of personal and career counselling services

to rural Newfoundland and Labrador" (ibid.). The learning resource package consisted of the following materials:

Videos:
"Reflections on the Fishery: NCARP Training Excerpts", 1993.
"NCARP Counselling Scenarios"

Manuals:

The Fishery of Newfoundland and Labrador, published by Employment and Immigration Canada, October, 1993.

The Fishery Of Newfoundland and Labrador, Facilitator's Guide, published by: Employment and Immigration Canada, October, 1993.

From Talk To Action, A program focusing on fishers and their livelihoods, HRD, 1993.

From Talk To Action, Guide to Facilitation, Memorial University, 1993.

From Talk To Action, A Career Counselling program with a focus on fisherpersons and their livelihoods, NCARP, 1993. Memorial University.

People Working With People, A Facilitator's Guide, Prepared for Employment and Immigration Canada, Prepared by Extension Community Development Co-operative, July, 1993.

Co-op Basics - Co-op Resource Package #1, prepared for HRD NCARP Unit by the Newfoundland - Labrador Federation of Co-operatives.

Co-operatives and Community Development - NCARP Co-op Resource Package # 2, prepared for HRD NCARP Unit, prepared by The Newfoundland -Labrador Federation of Co-operatives.

The video, "Reflections on the Fishery: NCARP Training Excerpts", is a 98 minute video that featured Dr. Leslie Harris, The Chairman of the Independent Review Panel on

Northern Cod, Dr. Douglas House, Sociologist and the Chairman of the now defunct Newfoundland Economic Recovery Commission, Earl McCurdy, the President of the Fisherman Food and Allied Workers (FFAW), Bernard Martin, a Petty Harbour Fisherman, Bernadette Dwyer, Manager of the Fogo Island Fishery Co-operative, and Larry Coady, Regional Director of Science with the Department of Fisheries and Oceans (DFO).

The video opened with the question "How did we come to be in this state?" All speakers generally provided similar responses to this question; citing foreign overfishing, federal mismanagement, growth of the seal herd, and an over-reliance on the fishery as an "employer of last resort", as well as other environmental factors.

Next the question of training for displaced fishery workers was dealt with. McCurdy voiced strong concerns over the shape the NCARP training was taking; stating that many NCARP recipients have voiced the question of "training for what?" McCurdy argued that the programs are useless unless they focus on "developing alternative economic opportunities". He cited the example of the foolhardiness of training people for jobs in fields that are already flooded with trained people, for instance, "we can't have 10,000 hairdressers in Newfoundland". Bernard Martin voices similar concerns, stating that the "whole thrust of retraining/re-education is fatally flawed". Douglas House, in a lengthy interview on

this video, spoke of the inherent problems involved in attempting to train so many people at once, admitting that while mistakes have been made at the beginning of the NCARP process, overall the focus on training or re-education is sound. House explains:

> I think there have been some good decisions made - I think the focus on basic education is a correct one...What needs to be done now is more carefully examine where the alternative economic opportunities are likely to be...

In addition, House argues that training must be tailored, "more targeted" to the specific needs of the people, regionally rather than nationally or even provincially, stating that the training needs of the residents of the Northern peninsula of Newfoundland may be different from the needs of those living on the Avalon Peninsula.

House calls for the co-operation of HRD, the Provincial Department of Education and the community colleges in the development of further training initiatives. He states that together these organizations can better identify what kind of training is needed. House advises that the first step is to put to rest the question of, "training for what?" He advises that the displaced fishery workers must become more "proactive" in taking ownership of their futures:

> Instead of just saying retraining for what and kind of sitting back and expecting somebody else to tell them for what - they've gotta become more active - more pro-active if you will in determining their own future and that includes determining what their

> own education's going to be - so find out about what the alternative opportunities are - find out about what has to be done in order to take advantage of those opportunities in your region - in your community and then find out about what niche you personally might fill in that process and then you can decide what training you need to get in order to do that. I think people gotta take their own fate in their own hands a bit more in respect to training as well as employment.

Bernadette Dwyer also focuses on the need for people to come together to work on this problem themselves, she calls for communities to come together. This position is a reflection of Dwyer's support for the UI dependency argument put forth by the federal government and others. Speaking at a community forum conducted by the Coalition for Fisheries Survival and Memorial University in 1990, Dwyer stated:

> If those programs weren't there, and so accessible and so easy to abuse, we would have been facing up to this crisis in the fishery three years ago ("Empty Nets", 1990:23).

But McCurdy challenges this view arguing that, this sort of idea is flawed and is based on a romantic view of a self-sufficient rural way of life that does not exist in reality. McCurdy states that it is difficult to retrain for jobs that are not there and that it is not sensible to promote developing other opportunities in these small communities. He says that "it is one thing to develop other opportunities around a stable fishery" but without a stable fishery these other ventures will probably fail. In regards to the question

of "training for what?" he points out that while Newfoundlanders have always been willing to go away to work, the National job scene is poor right now, so he argues that it is a logical question.

The "Politics of Fishing" was also discussed in this video. All agreed that the Federal Government had a responsibility to the displaced fishery workers. But the question of how long the government should help was one that House commented on. While he admitted that government has a responsibility to "supply a basic level of support to people during a period of adjustment", he made it clear that this responsibility must have limits. He indicates that people have to take responsibility for their own situation, and that state help will only frustrate people who want to be "productive contributors to society":

> Government has a responsibility to supply a basic level of support to people during a period of adjustment...Government also has a responsibility, I think, to provide information to people to let them see what kinds of future alternatives they are realistically going to have either in the fishery or outside the fishery and then help prepare those people to take advantage of those alternatives. The notion that government should just simply be providing income support at a very generous level for forever is not fair to the people 'cause most people want to be productive contributors to society.

The video "NCARP Scenarios", was a tutoring device geared at providing sample scenarios that the facilitator might encounter, and possible counselling techniques they might

employ in response to them. The video begins with examples of poor listening skills versus good listening skills, which are vital to becoming a good facilitator or counsellor. A skit is performed in which a female NCARP recipient relays to her counsellor the difficulties she faces at home, such as child care demands and financial problems, as a result of being enroled in NCARP training. It is made clear that it is the facilitator/counsellor's job to turn negative thinking into positive thinking, and that empathy is the first key to communicating with the troubled person. The video proceeds to show the facilitator/counsellor how to convince the NCARP recipient that if they "apply themselves" they can do anything. They cite the fear of returning to school and studying mathematics as an example. The skit has a number of people role playing (acting) as displaced fishery workers complaining about their situation and blaming others for their plight, instead of simply "applying themselves" and "thinking positive" about the opportunity to retrain.

The facilitator (i.e., actor) in this skit listens to their "complaining" and "blaming" and then attempts to move the discussion away from negative thinking to positive thinking, presumably as any "good" facilitator would. First he attempts to show them that mathematics (and presumably other subjects) are not as daunting as they may think or remember. He points out that they use basic mathematics in

their daily lives, for example, when preparing a family budget or a grocery list. Gradually, he leads them to a point, through introspection, where they stop blaming others and look to themselves as being responsible (at least partly), for the situation they find themselves in, so that they can stop wasting energy on blaming others and look within for positive solutions to their problem. The counsellor directs them to "look to the positive things they can do." He tells them that "we can accomplish just about anything we want to, if we set our minds to it...". He asks them to think of the positive aspects of the NCARP program. He tells them that negative thinking can get in the way of career planning and that while its "okay to be scared and that blaming is a natural reaction... we have to understand that its not a way out - that you also have to take responsibility for where you're going to go". A previously frustrated displaced fishery worker (i.e, an actor) then sums up the lesson by saying "so basically what you are saying is blaming others, even though they may deserve it, is not gonna' help us to get on with our lives".

The video proceeds to briefly deal with marital counselling as well, providing a scenario in which a woman is overwhelmed and emotionally stressed. She is suffering from insomnia and headaches and communication with her husband and child is strained as a result of the problems associated with

being displaced by the moratorium. The potential facilitator/counsellor is shown how to listen and empathize with the person and to encourage communication with her husband, in addition to directing the person to think of solutions to her problem.

"From Talk To Action" also focussed on a self-help solution to the plight of the displaced fishery worker. The focus of this series is to "provide some structure to guide the participants through the process of becoming actively involved in influencing decisions about the fishery" (Government of Canada,HRD,1993l: ii). This series deals with the anxiety experienced by the displaced workers, and it also aims to train the facilitator in ways to alleviate anxiety and to promote positive thinking amongst the displaced workers so that they can make choices about their futures. Like the videos, the series focuses on the necessity for individuals and communities to come together to discuss their problems and to take an active role in their futures. This series provides instruction on how to lobby government for better programs, how to deal with their fears, hopes and uncertainties about their futures. Basically, the series gives the impression that with the proper approach, the displaced workers can have an effective voice in their own future.

One package provided as part of this series, is a collection of fishery related news releases, fishing facts and

telephone numbers of politicians. It appears that initially this series in conjunction with the other publications, The Fishery of Newfoundland and Labrador: Module One Overview of The Fishery, and it's accompanying Facilitator's Guide, were focussed on educating the potential Facilitator and later the NCARP recipients about the fishery, its history, its crisis and how the size of the workforce for the "fishery of the future" will have to be reduced by at least fifty percent. In the publication People Working With People: A Facilitator's Guide, the I.O.O. facilitator is briefed on how to provide information on community economic development and strategic planning to the displaced workers. This guide provided material to conduct a workshop on the topic. In the introduction to the workshop it states:

> This workshop is designed to provide introductory training in community economic development and strategic planning to adult residents of Newfoundland and Labrador who are involved in the Northern Cod Adjustment Recovery Program (NCARP). As well as familiarizing NCARP learners with the concepts of community economic development and strategic planning, the workshop is designed to increase critical awareness of existing and alternative development structures and processes so that participants will be better equipped to get involved in informed debate about the future of their communities. It is also designed to facilitate the learning of practical skills so that participants will be better able to participate in the development of their communities (Government of Canada,HRD,1993e:1).

Consistent with the other resources, the "NCARP learner" is informed that he or she is responsible for his or her own

learning and future (ibid.:8). It is stated that the facilitator should inform the "NCARP learner" that one of the reasons this workshop was developed was because of the "concern that much of the ABE training is not really related to the learners' real life situation, and that this is part of an attempt to make the training more relevant" (ibid.:12).

The Co-op Resource Packages were geared toward providing education related to alternative community development in the form of co-operatives. The objectives of Co-op package #1 were: "To provide participants with an overview of co-operatives as community-based business options" and "To provide members of fishery co-operatives with a foundation in co-op principles and practices to help them better participate in the future of their co-operatives" Package # 2 stated its objectives as "To provide participants with an understanding of how the collective, co-operative approach can help communities plan a realistic, self-reliant future within the current fishery crisis", and "[to] provide an opportunity for individuals and groups to identify and explore co-operative opportunities in their local areas". Basically, the focus was on "brainstorming", a process whereby individuals think collectively about alternative solutions for employment within their own communities, the inherent message being that the fishery of the future will probably only employ fifty percent of the previous numbers and that only with co-operation and

positive thinking at the community level would a secure future be a possibility.

Improving Our Odds In Action

Between January and June 1994, over 200 facilitators were dispersed to 60 sites in Newfoundland and Labrador to deliver the I.O.O. message. Each site consisted of two co-facilitators and fifteen to twenty participants. I.O.O. was targeted at both fish plant workers and fish harvesters who had been displaced as a result of the northern cod crisis and subsequent moratorium on that fishery. Relying on this information, and the learning resource package "From Talk To Action" the delivery of the I.O.O. program was guided by adhering to a basic structure that reflected the previously outlined learning objectives. The six weeks program, HRD explained, was intended to provide a forum where displaced fishery workers could "articulate" their major concerns (Government of Canada,HRD,1994b:2). I.O.O. was also viewed as an "opportunity" for clients to gain "insights into community economic development processes and to examine and explore some alternative career or employment options" (ibid.:4). Encouraging displaced fishery workers to take an "active" role in addressing their unemployment problem and the effects of this on their communities was consequently the primary purpose

of I.O.O.

The flexible, informal and unstructured nature of the I.O.O. program was emphasized by HRD and Dr. Whelan (Whelan Interview, December 5, 1996). But study of the I.O.O. program indicates a certain level of organization and structure. Classes were conducted for five hours Monday to Friday for six weeks and structured around the information and learning resource packages (previously outlined) provided during the facilitator workshop. The program was guided by a basic structure that reflected the seven I.O.O. learning objectives. Sessions were arranged around topic modules that directly correlated with the learning objectives outlined by HRD and Whelan. A glimpse into what actually happened during these sessions can be garnered from interviews with former facilitators and counsellors.

Facilitators from interviews number six and seven reported that during their sessions they focussed on the first learning objective at the outset of the program. One facilitator explains that this topic module provided the participants with a chance to engage in discussion about the state of the fishery, the socioeconomic effects of the crisis and specifically how the crisis affected them individually as well as their communities. The other facilitator said that similar discussions occurred within her group. Both stated that they were expected, as I.O.O. facilitators, to encourage

participants to think specifically about the "current realities" in the fishery. Questions about what the fishery of the future would be like and whether they realistically could envision themselves as a part of it arose often.

The second objective, "To recognize the need for individual and collective participation in the process of community development" is closely linked to the third and fourth objectives, "To discuss the process of community development and "To explore methods and approaches to support the viability and vitality of rural communities"

Both facilitators invited guest speakers from community agencies, such as ACOA, to lecture on Community Economic Development issues (CED). The response to this component will be discussed in chapter six in the critique of I.O.O. and Choices. A skills component comprised both the fifth and sixth learning objectives; "To recognize the knowledge and skills that are required to secure and maintain employment in today's labour force" and "To identify individual knowledge and skills that are transferable to future work". According to Whelan's findings:

> Respondents in the Stephenville and Rocky Harbour regions registered a notable number of generic and specific skills they had identified they possessed with no one indicating that these skills could not be transferred to another occupation (Government of Canada,HRD,1994d:32).

One facilitator reported that most participants understood the

benefits of education and training in securing jobs, but many also felt that their fishery or plant skills were very specific to the fishing industry and therefore not very transferable.

For the Career Exploration component, participants were prompted to contemplate questions, such as "Who am I?", and "What interests me?" and "Would you or could you work at this job?", to initiate brainstorming on alternative career avenues (Interview #7, March 4, 1997). One facilitator reported that the Holyrood I.O.O. groups visited local learning facilities such as the Newfoundland Career Academy, Cabot College and a Career Information Resource Centre. To initiate brainstorming on alternative careers and skills assessment participants were encouraged to think about their past job experiences and to think about how any of these skills could be transferred to new jobs. The other reported that similar field trips and activities were undertaken by her group as well.

The above overview provided only a glimpse into the implementation of the I.O.O. program. A more comprehensive understanding of what shape the I.O.O. program took, as well as the reactions to the learning objectives, is provided in the program critique provided in Chapter six.

Conclusion

This chapter has demonstrated the federal government's commitment to active income support programming, as evidenced by the design of the NCARP program and more specifically the I.O.O. program. It has shown that I.O.O was geared towards encouraging displaced workers to become active by first accepting responsibility for their unemployment situation and subsequently seeking a solution for it.

The following chapter is devoted to describing the TAGS program and Choices, an employment counselling program similar to I.O.O. This Chapter shows that the federal commitment to active versus so-called passive programs continued even across party lines. In fact, the federal commitment remained strong even through a change of Government in the Fall of 1993 when the Liberals defeated the Progressive Conservative Party in a Federal Election.

> What we have on our hands is not just an "adjustment problem to use the current bureaucratic

> lingo. We have the most wrenching societal upheaval in Canada since the Great Depression of the 1930's (McCurdy, 1994 - Radio Broadcast).

Introduction

This chapter is divided into two sections. The first section is dedicated to a discussion of the TAGS program; specifically, to the context from which it emerged and its active component. Part two describes Choices, a TAGS employment counselling program which incorporated the active concept.

TAGS: Section 1

In a press release on April 19, 1994, Lloyd Axworthy, Minister of Human Resources, and Brian Tobin, Minister of Fisheries and Oceans, announced that The Atlantic Groundfish Strategy (TAGS) would replace NCARP on May 16, 1994.

With the announcement of TAGS, Tobin indicated that income support benefits would be six per cent less than on NCARP (Government of Canada,HRD/DFO,1994c). Subsequently, a total of 39,000 people qualified for TAGS benefits of which 28,000 were Newfoundlanders (Government of Newfoundland, 1997:3). Sixty per cent of TAGS recipients in Newfoundland were from the processing sector (plant workers) with forty per cent from the harvesting sector (ibid.). Like NCARP, income

support, early retirement initiatives, training inside the fishery, adjustment training, green projects and mobility programs were also components of TAGS. Also like NCARP, the primary mandate of TAGS was to achieve adjustment amongst displaced workers at a level of at least fifty percent.

Adjustment training as outlined by the federal government aims to "prepare" the displaced fishery worker for

> new employment opportunities by upgrading the skills and knowledge needed to find work in job markets that need (these) new skills (Government of Canada,HRD,1995d)

Persuading people to exit the fishery was identified as a goal of TAGS:

> TAGS is designed to help Canadian fishers and fish plant workers with a substantial historical attachment to the Atlantic groundfishery develop new skills and careers outside the fishing industry (ibid.).

"Building on your Strengths", an information packet distributed by the Federal Government contained the motto, "If you fail to plan you plan to fail". It too emphasized the necessity of training for work outside the fishery:

> Planning is essential to success, particularly career planning, As a TAGS participant, you will face the challenge of major career and lifestyle changes. With help from your TAGS counsellor, you may approach these changes in a systematic, constructive way... (ibid.).

The TAGS program was provided with a $1.9 billion budget,

of which $275 million was allotted specifically for active programming throughout Atlantic Canada and Quebec (Government of Newfoundland,1997:8). Specifically, $1.2 billion of the overall budget was targeted for Newfoundland of which a total of $128 million was spent on active training and counselling programs in the province of Newfoundland up to 1997 (ibid.). In a federal news release on April 19, 1994, both Axworthy and Tobin repeatedly stated that TAGS was designed to promote active or adjustment training measures. Tobin emphasized that the success of TAGS was contingent upon acceptance of the labour adjustment measures which are "designed to help individuals in accessing new career training and job opportunities outside the fishery". Furthermore, Axworthy, stated that "these measures are designed to help people help themselves and to take advantage of new opportunities" (Government of Canada,HRD/DFO,1994c). Contained in every Federal Government news release, pamphlet and newsletter issued since the Moratorium was declared in 1992, is the unmistakable message that the fishery of the future will not be able to sustain a large number of workers and that the government is no longer willing to "subsidize" the failing industry.

This self-help theme was also evident in the opening statement in a TAGS information booklet distributed by mail to TAGS clients titled, "Helping People Help Themselves". It read

as follows:

> The labour adjustment component of TAGS stresses participants' involvement in skills development and training programs to prepare individuals for employment opportunities in a diversified and changing labour market (Government of Canada,HRD, 1994e:1).

On page two of the booklet a number of principles are listed which the TAGS recipient should adopt if they wish to "help themselves". It was noted that the adjustment component of the TAGS program would be organized around "individual career planning" and the "provision of assistance linked to active adjustment" (ibid.:2). The goals of career planning and employment counselling were:

> to assess individual employment possibilities, set goals and develop individual action plans
>
> The objective is to improve an individual's chances of finding a job
>
> A wide range of programs and services are available to assist you in making a transition to other employment (ibid.).

In an effort to encourage adjustment it was explained in this booklet that an "employment bonus" would be awarded to those willing to take a job outside the fishery if it paid less than their current TAGS benefits (ibid.:3).

A Wavering Federal Commitment to Active programming

The federal commitment to adjustment through active programming is questionable despite extensive public statements it issued about the benefits of this approach. It is questionable since the government has been unwilling to allocate sufficient funds for this task and because of the eventual willingness of government to revert to solely income support program. The $1.9 Billion TAGS budget was initially slated to last through to 1999, but due to "budgetary difficulties" that the federal government attributes to an unforeseen high number of eligible TAGS applicants, it was decided that the program would end one year earlier. As early as 1994, financial problems were identified as stated by Tobin in a news release on November 17, 1994. By October 1995, Tobin announced that the "deficit" had been studied and program adjustments were indeed warranted. As explained by Tobin:

> We consulted with industry, and conducted an extensive review of funding options...Industry recommended that the 1995/96 deficit be addressed through adjustments to active programming, administrative budgets and capacity reduction. We have accepted these recommendations (Government of Canada,DFO,1995).

As a result of negotiations between the FFAW and HRD it was agreed that the income support component would be maintained until August 1998 and that the deficit would be

addressed through the elimination of the active component. However, the FFAW made it clear it was unhappy with any cuts to the program at all.

> The government established a budget for TAGS before it knew how many people would qualify, and it failed to increase the budget as required when the numbers who qualified greatly exceeded their own wildly inaccurate estimate (MCCurdy,1996:1).

Subsequently, on July 22, 1996 DFO announced that all active programming would be abandoned by August 1, 1996, allowing only programs to continue where TAGS clients were already enrolled (Government of Newfoundland, 1997:35). In response to the Government's announcement that TAGS would have to end a year early in May 1998, instead of 1999, McCurdy vowed to fight this decision:

> the Government of Canada sent each TAGS recipient a letter telling them how much TAGS benefit they would receive, and for what period of time. They have no right to break that commitment because of a funding problem. We will fight tooth and nail any cut to the program... (ibid.).

It should be noted that while the financial commitment to the active component of TAGS ended, the government continued to promote the urgency of adjustment. Thus, cuts indicated not a wavering of its philosophical commitment to active measures, but simply a distancing from the financial commitment to them.

As previously indicated, prior to the elimination of the

active programming component HRD had vigorously promoted it as the key to adjustment. For example, the regional HRD office in St. Anthony developed a group employment counselling program similar to I.O.O. called "Choices". The active concept behind Choices was "marketed" with notable zeal. As explained by a TAGS co-ordinator:

> Within our local region we have accepted the primary mandate of providing employment counselling to clients whether they want it/are ready for it, or not (Government of Canada,HRD,1995b:4).

Northern Peninsula TAGS clients were identified by HRD as a group highly resistant to adjustment. This perception of resistance was the rationale used by HRD to justify the development of the Choices Program (ibid.:3). Using the resistance argument HRD explains that the Choices program was a suitable approach to employ:

> There really was not much else to realistically deliver to people who have literacy issues, no intention of relocating for jobs, no interest in academic skills training and very few local job opportunities (ibid.:5).

The following section provides an outline of the Choices program in an effort to provide insight into the `active' component that the TAGS program originally stated its commitment to.

The Choices Program

Choices was a twelve week TAGS employment counselling program delivered by HRD on the Great Northern Peninsula of Newfoundland to 216 TAGS clients between March 1995 and May 1995 (ibid.:8). The following is a list of sites where Choices was delivered:

Ship Cove
Reefs Harbour
Green Island Cove
Black Duck Cove
Eddies Cove East
Cook's Harbour
Flower's Cove
Straitsview
Goose Cove
Bide Arm
Englee
Sandy Cove

The rationale provided for the development of this program is outlined by HRD in the 1995, Choices Evaluation Report. This report states that extensive dialogue between TAGS clients and the deliverers of TAGS in the Fall of 1994, concluded that there was a necessity for further employment counselling (ibid.:5). A TAGS counsellor, reported that individual counselling sessions with TAGS clients indicated to her and her colleagues that there existed a need for a group employment counselling approach in order to persuade clients to participate in the adjustment option. (Interview # 1, January 23, 1997). She stated that while I.O.O. had given people a "chance to chat about their problems", a more specific group counselling program was needed (ibid.).

Declarations of "disappointment" with past employment counselling initiatives such as Improving Our Odds and Life Skills were documented (Government of Canada,HRD,1995b:5):[3]

> The Choices group process was initially conceived in the early Fall 1994. Many participants who had participated in previous initiatives including Life Skills and Improving Our Odds expressed that a big disappointment with those initiatives was that they just `left you hanging' - that there was no concrete link to preparing for jobs (ibid.).

According to HRD the Choices Program was developed in an effort to provide this "concrete link". After consultation with local private and public colleges and TAGS counsellors, HRD devised the "terms of reference" for the Choices program (ibid). HRD outlines the emergence of the Choices program and its terms of reference as follows:

> With input from Outreach counsellors and local college partners, the CEC designed terms of reference for a group assessment and planning process that would complement and accelerate the efforts already begun through individual counselling intakes. Overriding our concern was, 1) our ability to provide extensive legitimate counselling services to such a large number of clients in a timely manner, 2) the extremely low number of clients actively proceeding with plans to adjust out of the fishery, 3) the high illiteracy levels of clients in the area related to the lack of interest in academic upgrading and, 4) great pressure from both clients and our employer, the federal government, to help TAGS participants stay active (ibid.).

After these initial consultations, HRD proceeded to "market"

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[3] The Lifeskills program referred to here is a counselling program very similar to I.O.O. and Choices that was also offered to NCARP clients.

the Choices program to local private and public colleges, inviting proposals for a development strategy for implementation and delivery of Choices (ibid.:6). As explained in this report, HRD defined the basic philosophy and goals of the Choices program, but the specific content of the program was left to the discretion of the institutions chosen to deliver the program:

> The particular details and content of Choices was left to each institution to design so that creative and unique delivery approaches would not be impeded or overlooked by set content established and designed internally by CEC (ibid.).

HRD explains that Choices was "marketed" as a "facilitative group process" that was not intended to be limited by "set curriculum and timetables":

> This Choices initiative was not to be a `program' as such characterized by formal instruction techniques and hemmed-in by set curriculum and timetables. The initiative was marketed to college partners as a facilitative group process that would primarily be aimed at addressing concerns and interests of clients themselves as related to planning for adjustment out of the fishing industry (ibid.).

By the end of December 1994 contracts had been awarded to "Academy Canada, WestViking College of Applied Arts, Technology and Continuing Education, and Norpen Technical College" (ibid.:7). Between December 1994 and February 1995 these colleges developed a program outline and delivery plan and then proceeded to hire individuals to work as Choices facilitators providing them with a one week Choices in-service

training workshop. This In-Service was conducted between February 20th. and the 24th., 1994 in Hawkes Bay on the Great Northern Peninsula.

Facilitator In-Service Training

The facilitator training in-service conducted by HRD and Norpen College opened with an information session which provided an overview of the "philosophy and goals" of the Choices program. The objectives were listed by HRD representatives and Norpen College as follows:

> Assist participants to assess their present needs, interests, aptitudes and employability skills.
>
> Enable the participants to develop job search techniques and career decision making skills.
>
> Offer a personal development package that will give the participants a better sense of self, and the communication skills needed to successfully deal with others.
>
> Provide participants with the opportunity to develop their self-confidence and self-assertiveness enabling them to cope more effectively with change.
>
> Assist participants to explore a variety of career and training options thus making them more aware of what is available to them and how to take advantage of these options.
>
> Provide participants with the opportunity to explore the many careers available today by exposure through hands-on job shadowing.
>
> Provide participants with the information they need in order to successfully complete action plans and set goals for themselves (Government of Canada,

1995a3)

It was inferred that a pervasive lack of confidence and self-esteem in the TAGS client population had influenced the development of these objectives:

> The biggest problem with Newfoundlanders is that they don't believe in themselves. Many may believe that they failed at school in the past and therefore don't believe that they can do it now. You will have to change their image of themselves. So when people seem negative and have a don't give a shit attitude, ask yourself is it for real or is it just a defence mechanism... (ibid.).

A lecture was delivered on the crisis in the fishery and the "harsh realities" of a reduced workforce in the "fishery of the future". Facilitators were informed that Choices was created in an effort to persuade TAGS clients to confront this "harsh reality". Facilitators were tutored on the best possible approach to encouraging this confrontation. Consistent with the active or self-help philosophy of Choices the Facilitators were encouraged to think about the TAGS clients' dilemma in terms of a question: "What do people require in order to make a comprehensive decision about their future?" The following points were identified as things that TAGS clients need to develop or contemplate in the process of making a comprehensive decision about adjustment:

> Self Confidence
> A Good Self Concept
> How to make a Decision
> What is your current situation?
> What do you need for the future?
> What are the economic and social trends in the

area?
What are the options?
What is there to look forward to? (ibid.).

Facilitators were informed that the development of "self-confidence" and a "good self concept" were crucial to TAGS clients in the "process" of helping themselves access new opportunities or even to consider other possibilities.

In an effort to heighten the facilitators' awareness and empathy for the stress and "harsh realities" that the TAGS clients were facing they, like I.O.O. facilitators, were encouraged to role play. Role playing provided the opportunity for facilitators to imagine that they were displaced from their livelihoods and facing uncertainty and financial hardship, in addition to providing them an opportunity to try out some of the techniques listed in the "good facilitator" guide. Like I.O.O. the importance of self-help through introspection and positive thinking in the displaced workers was emphasized. As explained by HRD, Choices was a "process" whereby the participants would be encouraged and equipped with the tools necessary to "decide for themselves what they want" and not a "program" "where they are told what to do" (ibid.). As outlined in the Choices Facilitator guideline booklet, it was the Choices facilitator's duty to foster self-confidence and help people "believe in themselves":

The most important thing is that we build up

> people's self esteem. As people put up barriers and come up with all type of reasons why they can't further their education, you will have to use your own judgement and figure out what is real and what is a defence mechanism. Have faith and patience and find a way to break those barriers down. Use whatever resources are necessary to expose people to the harsh realities of the future of the Northern Peninsula and all of Newfoundland for that matter. The northern fish stocks have decreased by 80% since the closure of the Northern cod. Where is Newfoundland headed? Use who and what you can to get people talking about how the whole way of life is changing and that with the abolishment of the social security net that we've been used to, things are changing and things are changing fast. Faster than anyone realizes. Education is like fishing. If the fish did come back you haven't got a prayer if you don't have a boat or the gear. Well in this day and age if you haven't got that piece of paper(at least a high school diploma) you haven't even got a chance to compete. Remember...Trust yourselves and each other...If not you'll crack up... (ibid.:2)

A workshop focussing on the field of facilitation was provided to Choices facilitators in an effort to provide an introduction to the basics of facilitation skills. These skills would be requisite to their role in delivering the Choices program. A lecture was provided on the principles of "good facilitation". An extensive list of descriptors was provided in an effort to profile the "good facilitator". The following is a small sample:

- a motivator
- a leader
- a listener
- a counsellor
- a psychologist
- a manager

As with I.O.O., HRD emphasized the "flexible" nature of

the Choices program:

> Although there were goals and objectives to guide the process, it was emphasized that the delivery was to be as flexible and responsive to client needs as possible (Government of Canada,HRD, 1995b:6).

Contrary to HRD's claims about "flexibility", analysis of the Choices program reveals that it was indeed guided by an organized schedule. Whether this message was clearly articulated to the institutions subcontracted to design Choices may be questioned. HRD identified facilitator inexperience as a major factor in the breakdown of this communication:

> Formally trained teachers who had no, or little, direct experience or skills training in group facilitation or group counselling found the Choices delivery concept very difficult to grasp and carry out. Many of the Choices facilitators were stuck in the instructor mode and felt uncomfortable without set `lesson plans' and schedules. In addition, many could not adapt the concept of allowing the group ownership over their own agenda and progress. Although an in-service was provided prior to starting deliver and both College personnel and Outreach Counsellors concentrated greatly on the unstructured delivery design of the process, many of the facilitators could not abandon the old teacher instruction style of working with a group (ibid.:16).

In fact, the facilitators were provided with a Choices program outline divided into a number of themes incorporated under the heading, "General Area of Competency". Under each area of competency is a theme or task. Under each task is a number of questions or exercises to engage Choices participants in,

known as sub-tasks. The following is a sample of some of the Tasks and sub-tasks listed under the general area of competencies and a glimpse into how some facilitators incorporated them on a daily basis:

General Area of Competency: Self-Assessment

Task 1: Why are we here?

- Why are we here?
- What are they (students) expecting to have achieved at the end of the program?
- What is happening in our community and our province?

- Brainstorm some ways to improve the economic conditions in our community and province (Government of Canada,HRD,1995a).

The question "Why are we here?" was used to encourage participants to open up and discuss how the moratorium was affecting their lives and to get participants to face the "realities" of the fishery of the future. Specifically, as reported in interview numbers three, four and eight, participants voiced concern about the uncertainty about their place in the fishery of the future. In addition, many stated their concerns about their TAGS benefits and the fact that they were "forced" to attend Choices in order to receive their payments. Most participants acknowledged that they knew the Choices program was an attempt by government to get them to move from the Northern Peninsula. As explained by Interview number four, the participants were not in denial about the "realities", in fact he stated that:

> They all seemed to face the fact that the cod-fishery may not come back for a long time, and if it comes back it will not be on the same scale as in the past (Interview # 4,1997).

In addition, this facilitator explained that the discussions about these "realities" "seemed to pay off" as participants began to "realize they must look at other options other than the fishery" (ibid). Another facilitator on the other hand reported that most participants in her group were strongly opposed to the idea of relocation, reporting strong ties to the Northern Peninsula and to their jobs in the fishery (Interview # 8, August 1, 1997).

General Area of Competency: Dynamics Of Unemployment

Task 1: Understanding the effects of job loss

Sub-tasks:

- Identifying resources for further support.
- What can we do to improve our situation.
- How can our families, community at large, etc. help us?
- Should we set goals? i.e., return to school, relocate to another area, or seek more suitable employment?
- Employment vs. unemployment.
- Seasonal vs. full-time employment
- Meeting financial and social needs.
- Job seeking and the hidden employment opportunities.
- Resume writing and letters of introduction.
- Interviewing skills and techniques; how to dress, questions to ask, questions most asked at interviews, role plays.
- completing post-secondary and student loan applications.
- Discuss the work environment; the importance of communication skills, good telephone techniques,

appropriate dress, actions on the job.
- Mock interview (Government of Canada,HRD, 1995a).

During the portion of the program discussion focused on the above listed topics, facilitators encouraged participants to contemplate other jobs that they felt they might be good at. The importance of goal setting as reported by interviewee number eight and others were also discussed and encouraged. The facilitators also informed the participants about resources that existed in the province, such as ACOA, Enterprise Newfoundland and Labrador, the federal job bank, the internet and Y Enterprise. In addition, speakers were invited to lecture on employment issues, job search strategies and to provide motivational talks as well.

As a part of this component of the program all participants were encouraged to organize a resume and visualize themselves applying for a new job. Another facilitator reported for instance, that a female police officer was invited to his group to provide inspiration to the group. This officer shared her own experience with job displacement and the experience of having to start over and begin a new career as a police officer. In addition, all groups invited speakers from various agencies and government, such as the Department of Employment and Labour Relations and The Women's Enterprise Bureau. Videos were used to provide

information on alternative careers and also to provide inspiration to spur them to action. At one site, for example, a film on the life of Terry Fox was shown as a motivational tool. One facilitator reported that some guest speakers who were invited were unable to attend and so the class travelled to other locations to attend lectures at the participants own expense (Interview # 3, February 20, 1997).

General Area of Competency: Career Planning
Task 1: Assessment

Sub-task:

- Interest Survey
- Aptitude Survey
- Career Interest Inventory
- Discuss and examine the different career choices.
- Explore the many career choices of today.
- Labour market information
- Researching the career of one's choice.
- Guest speakers from different careers and occupations.
- Explore financial options
- Preparation for job shadowing component (Government of Canada,HRD,1995a).

This component was basically an extension of the previous component which also focussed on attempting to convince these displaced fishery workers to accept that their jobs are permanently gone and that they must relocate to access new opportunities. To this end field trips were organized at all sites in an effort at least in theory to introduce participants to other career opportunities. The difficulties

associated with this job shadowing and career exploration component are discussed extensively in chapter six. It can be pointed out here though that this exercise was seen as basically futile by both the participants and the facilitators because the Northern Peninsula is a relatively isolated fishery-based economy where job shadowing opportunities were limited. This limitation is exhibited very clearly in the field trips conducted by one group. The facilitator reported that they visited a Taxidermy shop in St. Anthony, a local high school during drug awareness week to attend a lecture on drug awareness and a Marine Centre in Port Saunders to hear a "brief talk" on marine equipment. Most telling of all is the fact that he stated in a report he submitted to HRD that "there wasn't much to be seen" in Port Saunders and they "put in time walking around..." (Interview # 4, February 21, 1997). Another group visited Corner Brook, Stephenville and Deer Lake in order to tour post secondary institutions (Interview #3, February 20, 1997). As well, they toured the Grenfell House in St. Anthony to listen to a lecture on the Grenfell Economic Plan in addition to visiting the Viking Trail Tourism Association to hear a "presentation of their prospects for the future". Also they attended a lecture on Community Economic Development given by Parks Canada at the Viking site at L'Anse Aux Meadows. The next component dealt with was group membership.

General Area of Competency: Group Membership

Task 1: Developing and maintaining trust

- Expressing trust in the group.
- Why is it important to trust one another?
- First impressions.
- Prejudices and how they are formed.
- Participating in many different group activities (Government of Canada,HRD,1995a).

This component does not appear to be directly related to the previous employment counselling components, but it may be argued that it was incorporated as a response to what many, including the Newfoundland Government, labelled as negativity and resentment that exists amongst Newfoundlanders. In addition, as explained by one of the facilitators, it was a way to encourage participants to think about co-operation within their communities(Interview #8, August 1, 1997).

General Area of Competency: Coping and Managing Change

- How does change affect us?
- Discuss some changes that have taken place in our lives and communities in the past few years?
- How can change compliment our lives?
- How to cope with change? (Government of Canada,HRD,1995a)

Once again it is apparent that there exists some overlap between topics. This component is focussed once again on encouraging participants to voice their feelings and to try to think positively about change. Basically, they were

encouraged to think of the opportunities that the moratorium would provide them with - such as training or obtaining a high school diploma.

General Area of Competency: Stress

- Defining Stress
- Identifying stress in our lives
- stress management(ibid.)

One facilitator reported that small group discussions were conducted at her site on the topic of depression. Specifically, they were briefed on the signs of depression and what they can do to help others and themselves out of depression (Interview # 8, August 1, 1997).

General Area of Competency: Self-Confidence

- What is self-confidence? How does it affect our lives?
- Becoming aware of methods to enhance self-confidence.
- Increasing self-acceptance through the recognition of strengths.
- Building a positive self-image.
- Examine and discover potential.
- Understanding and overcoming shyness (Government of Canada,HRD,1995a).

During this component participants were asked to define their self-concept and were encouraged to think about the positive aspects of their personality and to identify areas which had potential.

General Area of Competency: Communications - Public Speaking.

- Methods of improving our communication skills
- Communication and the telephone
- Develop public speaking skills.
- Impromptu speeches.
- Steps to good report writing (ibid.).

One facilitator reported that he encouraged participants to read aloud to the class in an effort to improve their public speaking skills. He reported that the participants were stressed by this request and refused to participate in the exercise. Another facilitator reported that at her site participants were encouraged to think about the importance of "good listening" habits in the process of communicating a message.

General Area of Competency: Entrepreneurship

- What is entrepreneurship? Is it for me?
- Identification of opportunities.
- Marketing.
- Guest speakers from different agencies. i.e. ENL, ACOA (ibid.).

At all sites this area provided discussion of the benefits of entrepreneurship and community economic development. One facilitator reported for instance that he invited a local owner of the Eider Duck Enhancement company to provide motivation and to lecture on the process of

entrepreneurship. In addition, John Crane, the co-ordinator of the Straits Development Association came to speak on entrepreneurship. According to the facilitator, Mr. Crane called for more co-operation and for people to become involved in the community (Interview # 4, February 21, 1997).

General Area of Competency: Goals - Goal Setting.

- Defining Goals
- The importance of setting goals.
- Guidelines for setting personal goals.
- Achieving goals.
- Completing action plans
- Realizing goals (Government of Canada,HRD,1995a).

This component was really a repeat of others in which the participants were encouraged to accept the "realities" of the fishery and to set goals for the future.

Conclusion

This chapter provided an outline of the TAGS program, specifically describing its active component. Using the employment counselling program, Choices as an example, the manner in which the `active' philosophy was implemented was demonstrated. It was shown that Choices was formulated by the Federal Government in response to its perception of resistance to adjustment demonstrated by displaced workers living on the Great Northern Peninsula of Newfoundland. Similar to the

I.O.O program, Choices focussed encouraging ownership amongst the displaced workers for their unemployment problem. The promotion of positive thinking coupled with attempts at job search training comprised the main thrust of the Choices program.

> ...social scientists have become increasingly involved in studying programs that reflect ideological points of view, and one of the biggest problems faced by researchers is getting people to agree on criteria of success and failure. Yet such criteria are essential if social scientific research is to tell us anything useful about matters of value (Babbie, 1992:28).

Introduction

This chapter supplies an analysis of the active programs delivered under NCARP and TAGS, employing the evaluative framework described in chapter three. Thus, the aim of this chapter is to show that NCARP and TAGS active programs were misguided and have proved to be an inadequate approach to addressing the unemployment problem faced by displaced fishery workers.

The discussion of active experiments within Canadian social assistance programs discussed in Chapter Three demonstrated the inability of this approach to address the problem of unemployment. Despite the evidence of failure, as previously noted, the federal and provincial governments claim success and persist in highlighting these experiments as models for further social policy reform. From these contradictory evaluations rose the question of how success should be measured. As previously noted this thesis accepts the approach put forth by Shragge, Klein, Deniger, Murphy and others in which programs are evaluated by identifying their "stated goals" and then determining whether or not these goals were achieved. Employing this approach, this section of the chapter provides an analysis of Improving Our Odds and Choices, active programs implemented under the NCARP and TAGS programs.

Success or Failure?

It can be argued that I.O.O. and Choices are tools of social intervention since they were designed to execute changes in the size of the fishery workforce. As defined by Earl Babbie, "social intervention is an action taken within a social context for the purpose of producing an intended result" (Babbie, 1992:346, 347). Research involving programs of intervention demands that a "clarification" of the "specific intentions of the program" be undertaken (ibid.:10). In addition, establishing consensus for success or failure is central to the critique process (ibid.:28). The "specific intention" of NCARP and TAGS was to encourage at least fifty per cent of its clients to adjust out of the fishery. Adjustment since the onset of the moratorium was defined by the federal government as the "...transferring of plantworkers and fishers to gainful employment in other sectors" (Government of Canada,DFO,1994i:59). In the context of this definition and the approach put forth by Babbie and others, the active programming component of the NCARP and TAGS programs is a failure. Thousands of clients have not secured "gainful employment" outside the industry. In fact, by August, 1996 when active programming was suspended only 732 clients from all affected provinces combined had adjusted (Government of Canada,HRD,1998b:46).

A Post-TAGS Review Report published in February, 1998, showed that 66 percent of TAGS clients will still be eligible for benefits in August 1998 (Government of Canada,HRD, 1998a:5). In addition, a high number of TAGS clients who have exhausted their TAGS benefits have now moved on to the Social Assistance rolls or left the Province. It should also be noted that many of the 3,000 NCARP recipients who did not qualify for TAGS benefits have had to resort to social assistance:

> Of the 3,000 approximately 24 percent were a member of an SA case which received benefits in 1995 and 21 percent in 1996. During 1995 and 1996 about 30 percent of these individuals belonged to a case which received benefits for three months or less and some 70 percent received benefits for less than a year (Government of Canada,HRD,1996a:29).

Furthermore, thousands more TAGS clients no longer meet the eligibility criteria set out by the federal government and have also resorted to social assistance. Despite these paltry results, the federal government in a final evaluative report issued in March 1998, maintained that it had accomplished its mandate of adjustment (Government of Canada,HRD,1998b: xv). It is noted in this final report that government conducted this final evaluation of TAGS using a broader definition of adjustment, which allowed them to include retirees in the adjusted category resulting in a higher level of adjustment:

> Management notes that the evaluators used a different definition of adjustment than used by the

TAGS program...(ibid.:).

Rejecting this "different definition" this thesis evaluates the programs in the context of the stated goal of the NCARP and TAGS programs.

Consistently HRD has chosen to overlook its stated mandate of adjustment when evaluating its NCARP and TAGS active component. Both I.O.O. and Choices failed to promote adjustment, yet HRD rated them as beneficial and proposed that similar initiatives be implemented in the future. For example, in response to an evaluation report on Choices that had admitted that adjustment was not accomplished, management at HRD still proposed a continuation of similar counselling programs in the future (See Appendix 5). Responding to public criticisms that active programming has failed to accomplish adjustment and was also a waste of money, HRD claimed that while adjustment did not occur at the levels hoped, displaced workers had benefited in some way from the programs. In response to public criticism of the failure of NCARP and TAGS to realize their adjustment goals, Don Sellars, Regional Executive Head of HRD, for example, in a letter to the editor of the Gander Beacon, asserted that adjustment has taken place arguing that much of the training had resulted in building "pride" and a "feeling of accomplishment":

TAGS has positively touched the lives of thousands

> of Newfoundland and Labrador families and communities. This will be the lasting legacy of TAGS and its real measurement of success (Sellars, March 19, 1997:).

Sellars argues that simply because TAGS training has not ensured employment for the displaced fishery workers it cannot be assumed that it was a failure or a "waste of money":

> Was the funding spent on TAGS training a waste of money as it has been consistently portrayed in the media? From HRDC's perspective, it was an important investment in people, people who worked very hard to make the difficult transition beyond the uncertainties of the fishery (ibid.).

Success is defined not in terms of measurable adjustment levels, but in very abstract, non-measurable terms. It is alleged that these programs have effected monumental improvement in the levels of self-esteem, pride and awareness amongst displaced workers about their role in the fishery of the future or outside the fishery (Government of Canada,HRD, 1994d). As explained in the I.O.O. evaluative report:

> ...for most participants, the I.O.O. process was a positive, indispensable, and necessary experience. It enhanced self-esteem, increased self-insight, and added to the community awareness of participants (ibid.:i).

> The facilitative approach used to implement I.O.O. worked in that participants recognized that it was a different learning process and that its facilitators had the skills necessary to lead discussions and stimulate critical thinking (ibid.).

And as explained in the HRD evaluation report on Choices, the adjustment goal was not a success but at least the program

provided HRD with the "extra bonus" that enabled them to "help clients help themselves keep active in order to maintain income support benefits..."(Government of Canada,HRD,1995b: 5,7). In this argument of success exists a paradox. HRD maintains that increasing self-esteem, fostering positive attitudes, and encouraging individuals to contemplate new ventures for a future outside the fishery are key to the adjustment process. HRD asserts that I.O.O. and Choices have met with success in these areas (although it is virtually impossible to measure these concepts). As explained in a 1995 HRD TAGS Client Survey Report, many TAGS clients received personal and employment counselling and yet did not manage to adjust out of the industry. It is explained in this survey that employment counselling "can lead" to eventual adjustment. The survey also shows that by September 1995, 48 percent of TAGS clients had received counselling. Despite this high number the survey notes that there is little correlation with actual adjustment since there is still a low interest in adjustment (Government of Canada,HRD,1996a:7,8).

When failure is sometimes admitted, those involved in the design and delivery of I.O.O. and Choices charge that the success of the adjustment goal was impeded by the negative attitudes of the participants, poorly qualified facilitators, and negative publicity rather than a result of the focus on active programming itself. This thesis argues that like the

active experiments with Provincial social assistance programs I.O.O. and Choices failed because they are based on a fundamental misconception of the causes of unemployment. Specifically, these active programs are based on the notion that once individuals are tutored in job search skills and encouraged to think positively they will be "ready" to adjust and will do so successfully. In the current economic context, in which Newfoundland's unemployment rate exceeds 20% at times, it can be argued that a depressed economy versus a lack of skills hinders adjustment. Therefore, these active programs were pre-destined to fail since they overlook the role of the economy in creating unemployment while focussing on perceived inadequacies in the unemployed individual. In keeping with this approach, the question must be posed: was the specific intention of I.O.O. and Choices programs (adjustment out of the fishing industry) realized?

Achieving the stated aim of a program, as stated earlier, is the only true measure of success from the point of view of policy makers. Using this model it has been illustrated that active programming under NCARP and TAGS (specifically I.O.O. and Choices) were not successful initiatives. Despite this evidence of failure, HRD and the creators of these programs claim success. As previously explained they define success in very abstract, non-measurable terms, alleging that these programs have effected monumental consequences on the levels

of self-esteem, pride and awareness amongst displaced workers about their role in the fishery of the future. In addition, as an "extra bonus" it is maintained that these programs provided HRD with a device to simply keep people active in exchange for their benefits. From this comment it can be argued that these programs are seen as a "political symbol" and as a form of workfare.

The following section lists a number of issues identified by participants, facilitators and HRD as having impinged on the success of the I.O.O. and Choices programs. Specifically, these issues, while in some instances interrelated, are arranged under the following headings: Inadequate Facilitator Training, Mandatory Attendance, Lack of Planning and Foresight and Inadequate Resources.

Inadequate Facilitator Training

Facilitators argue that weaknesses in the training workshop itself limited successful facilitation. As explained by Interviewee number three, criticisms of the Choices program were not limited to the content of the program. They extended to the Facilitator Training In-Service as well. As he explained:

> We had a week training at the Hotel in Hawkes Bay prior to our starting as Facilitators in our respective areas. About half of us were retired teachers, who had some idea of working with

> students in the regular system, as well as in the adult education program. Most of the rest had very little or no experience in the classroom. The training itself was not really a teacher preparatory course, but a familiarization with the materials supposed to be covered, and some initiation into being able to present some things to adults. To me the end result of the training only introduced me to the other facilitators, so that I could feel free to talk to them if I ran into trouble and needed help. The course was very poorly designed. It was compiled by people who had very little or no training in Curriculum development; and only put together things to satisfy the people in the offices of HRD (Interview # 3, February 20, 1997).

A second facilitator, voiced similar concerns. In a final report he submitted to HRD in 1995 he stated that one problem was the poor quality of the facilitator training:

> In my opinion the training wasn't extensive enough. We were given a weeks training, although some of the Facilitators had never taught in a classroom before. Most of us had never been in a learning situation with adults before and this was also a disadvantage. I think the facilitators should have been given at least two months of training. During that time we could have met with different Departments of Government and we would have acquired a better knowledge of the program... (Interview # 5, February 21, 1997).

In an interview another facilitator, it was indicated that the training In-Service was inadequate for novices in the field of facilitation. She noted that some of the facilitators, some of whom were former school teachers or recent university graduates who had no teaching experience and who in fact did not even have a degree in Education appeared to be apprehensive about facilitating a Choices group.

Mandatory Attendance

A major criticism directed at both the I.O.O. and the Choices programs was centred around what NCARP and TAGS clients labelled as the punitive nature of both programs.

As explained in chapter four, active clients received higher financial benefits, a criterion clients believed constituted a means of "forcing" them to enrol in some form of training. While the federal government sometimes stated that attendance would be voluntary, often clients were informed that participation was mandatory. This conditionality prompted frustration and resentment which culminated in resistance to active programming. As explained by the FFAW, being "forced" to attend programs in exchange for their benefits created a general feeling of discontent. The FFAW records a marked "drop-out rate" at their education centres in response to the negative feelings of being forced to attend:

> In 1994, some HRD and TAGS counsellors in some parts of the province tried to enforce a regulation that everyone on the income support programs must be "active" in either education or community green projects. The issue of forcing people to attend school for something to which they felt they were already entitled got people's backs up. The drop-out rate for fish harvesters went up as this strategy was attempted (Johnston, 1996:2).

This issue of mandatory attendance emerged often with the I.O.O. and Choices programs. Discussion with former Choices

facilitators indicated that participants were annoyed by the "mandatory" nature of the program. In fact, many reported that they attended the Choices program because of pressure from TAGS counsellors to remain active in exchange for benefits (Government of Canada,HRD,1995b:2):

> One of the major obstacles in the delivery of Choices was the fact that 78% of the participants felt forced to attend. Outreach Counsellors are perceived as "forcing" clients to participate in initiatives like Choices because they present such opportunities for participation to clients who are not actively working on an adjustment-out plan of action. In addition, the situation in the fishery itself is <u>forcing</u> these people to think about alternative lifestyles, upgrading education and skills, possible relocation, etc., all of which are totally unacceptable to these clients (ibid.:11).

With the commencement of the Choices program it was determined that there was a sentiment of discontent among participants. This discontent was rooted in the frustration associated with what was termed, "forced" enrolment. The participants had been informed by their TAGS counsellor that the maintenance of their TAGS benefits was conditional upon their continued enrolment in the Choices program. This frustration was intensified by (perceived) apparent inconsistencies and inequities in the enforcement of the TAGS (pre) condition. As reported by a former Choices facilitator:

> In the beginning, most participants expressed negative feelings towards the program. Their negativity was mainly due to feelings of being forced into the program and that it was a waste of money. They felt the money spent for these programs should be spent elsewhere (Interview # 2,

February 20, 1997).

According to some former facilitators a similar perspective was held in their respective Choices sites. In the words of one facilitator:

> One disadvantage was that the participants were forced to go to the program, on the threat of losing their TAGS, while other people stayed at home and received their TAGS without any problems. (Interview #5, February 21, 1997).

In a final report submitted to Norpen College by one facilitator similar concerns were documented at his site:

> When the class began there were fifteen participants and most of them entered the class with a mixture of emotions and concerns. They were not really interested in participating but were taking part because they were afraid of losing their TAGS funding. (Interview # 3, February 20, 1997).

In the I.O.O. Evaluative report the issue of "compulsory attendance" was also acknowledged. It is admitted that some I.O.O. facilitators had actually informed participants that attendance was mandatory and would be monitored. In addition, this message was highlighted in the NCARP options information Booklet distributed to clients in 1993, in which it is stated:

> Once you begin an approved training course you must continue to participate in order to receive your current NCARP income replacement rate. Participation will be monitored by EIC or FFAW (Government of Canada,DFO,1993b:5).

These mixed messages caused confusion and were responsible for causing concern about losing benefits if they are unwilling to attend programs. In an interview with the Evening Telegram

displaced fisherman Don Drew of Bay Bulls, stated that the situation is characterized as fear of getting a "financial strapping" if NCARP recipients refuse to participate in training programs. In Drew's words:

> On the one hand we're told we don't have to do training programs and on the other hand we have to do one ... You're going to have fishermen attending courses and they aren't going to want to be there. Those training programs are for people who want to learn something, not for someone forced into it (Cleary, February 28, 1993:2).

The indignation felt over the issue of force continued to be a matter of importance to displaced fishery workers as noted in recent TAGS reports. Between November 23 and December 1, 1997 the Parliamentary Standing Committee on Fisheries and Oceans chaired by Member of Parliament, George Baker, held forums throughout Newfoundland and Labrador to gather the "views" of TAGS recipients on the ideas of a Post-TAGS program. This all-party committee reported that the issue of force surfaced frequently at these forums stating that "the prevailing view was that the [programs] should be voluntary" (Government of Canada,1998c:11). A Federal Post-TAGS Review headed by Eugene Harrigan and published in February, 1998, also identified criticisms associated with non-voluntary programs:

> Respondents felt [however], that no person should be forced to take training and that if it is not a voluntary decision, it would be wasted on that

> particular person (Government of Canada,HRD, 1998a:17).

It can be argued that the Federal Government is responsible for generating discontent and resistance in relation to active programming, as in the case of Improving Our Odds and Choices. Contradictory messages delivered through press conferences, written correspondence and through counsellors and facilitators served to worry and confuse displaced workers. Subsequently, they contributed to the characterization of displaced fishery workers as unwilling to "help themselves" out of the crisis they had found themselves in. The resistance to adjustment training was represented by HRD, the media and those groups involved in the delivery of education programs as a "tug of war" between clients and the Government (Government of Canada,HRD, 1994g:16). (See Appendix 6). These feelings of dissatisfaction were intensified by disparaging comments made in the media by Walter Noel, Liberal Member of the House of Assembly in Newfoundland. As I.O.O. was being delivered Mr. Noel discredited the program in an article written for the Evening Telegram, titled "Province on a disaster course". In his words:

> We will never develop our economy through paying more people for doing nothing; through training people for unavailable jobs; through squandering taxpayers' dollars on extravagant training... hundreds of millions have been wasted providing unjustified assistance; paying people for delivering useless training programs...wasting resources on people who will never benefit from the

> training being provided; and paying people, and facilitators, to sit around talking - as the Improving Our Odds program will do. The time has come to wake up. Our province is on a disaster course. We can't afford to continue squandering money on bureaucratic boondogles. Programs and policies which have failed in the past, and the mentality responsible for them, will not produce a better future. How much longer do we have to wait for the revolution between the ears? (Noel, 1994:5).

As the program progressed similar criticisms arose amongst many I.O.O. participants as well. The I.O.O. group from Harbour Grace, for example, complained that they had anticipated that the program would provide a skills training component and not simply provide a forum for talking about their situation. As explained by Whelan:

> Participants expected I.O.O. to include some form of traditional "skills training". Because this expectation was not met nor was the intention, purpose, and goal of I.O.O. fully explained, some participants who had this expectation concluded the six-week process still in a frustrated state (Government of Canada,HRD,1994d:34).

Upon commencement of the I.O.O. and Choices programs participants encountered further problems as flaws in many elements of the program were exposed. It can be argued that these flaws signify inadequate planning and a lack of foresight in the design of these programs. Specifically, in the case of the Choices program criticisms were voiced pertaining to a repetition of topics already addressed in previously attended courses. One facilitator reported to HRD that participants were expressing feelings of monotony and

indifference at being "forced" to watch films they had previously viewed and attend lectures previously given by the same guest speakers that had participated in I.O.O. (Interview #3, Februrary 20, 1997). He also stated that the repetition of material interfered with the delivery of Choices and recommended in his final report to HRD and Norpen that:

> Much of the material in the Choices Program should be deleted since many of the plant workers have already participated in the Lifeskills and Improving Our Odds Programs (ibid.).

This frustration periodically created an atmosphere of discontent and overall disdain for the whole federal compensation approach. Generally these complaints were categorized as, "The government's wasting money". Participants in the St. Barbe location for instance, felt that Choices was a waste of money:

> They felt the money spent for these programs should be spent elsewhere. One suggestion I can remember hearing was "use the money to extend TAGS longer instead of wasting it in these programs". (Interview # 2, February 20, 1997).

HRD responded to these complaints as follows:

> As regards the issue of the Personal Development component of Choices being similar to that of Life Skills and Improving Our Odds, this is true. What Choices intended was to incorporate the I.O.O. approach and add on practical career-related issues. Perhaps therefore, it was not good practice to refer clients who had some similar participation to Choices... However, clients were fully briefed, at a minimum of three times each, on what the program was all about and they still entered Choices. Most admittedly did so with no regards to the content but because of fear of

> reprisals to income support (Government of Canada, 1995a2:12).

Lack of Planning

Community Economic Development (CED) and rural renewal were identified by the designers of I.O.O. as areas in which NCARP clients could create new opportunities for employment outside the fishing industry. I.O.O. participants were encouraged to discuss CED and to "brainstorm" on ideas for CED. Guest speakers provided information on the process of CED as well as providing motivational talks in an effort to spur NCARP clients to action.

When planning this component of the I.O.O. program HRD was aware of the geographical dispersal and isolation of the communities the program was targeted at. In light of this knowledge HRD should have foreseen the imprudence of this approach. According to one facilitator, many of the participants at his site participated fully with the CED exercises and demonstrated interest in the CED lectures given by guest speakers, but could not regard CED initiatives as a realistic solution to their unemployment problem he identified one major obstacle that limited the success of the CED

component of the I.O.O. program (Interview,#7, March 4, 1997). The fact that the twenty participants enroled at the Holyrood site resided in six different communities, negated the practicality of such a component. Keeping in mind the geographical dispersal and relative isolation of many of the communities affected by the cod moratorium it is probable that this obstacle may have impinged upon the responses to the CED component in other I.O.O. sites as well.

A lack of planning was also evident in the job shadowing and field trip component of the Choices program. Job shadowing was identified by HRD as a means of introducing TAGS clients to new careers by providing them with an opportunity to observe others in their place of employment. Considering the relative isolation of the Great Northern Peninsula in relation to major job centres of the province, Corner Brook and St. Johns, the limitations of this component should have been anticipated. For instance, many of the communities on the Great Northern Peninsula were built around the fishery as their primary and only industry and therefore there are limited opportunities to job shadow. Furthermore to job shadow elsewhere would involve extensive travel expenses. Apparently HRD had not foreseen these obstacles when planning the budget for this program.

At the outset of the Choices Program, Facilitators informed the participants of the budget allotted for the

twelve week session. As the program got underway, participants became perplexed by apparently illogical budget allotments which negated the specified aim of the Choices program (i.e., to encourage TAGS clients to avail of new opportunities and to leave the fishery and to move away from the Northern Peninsula). From the outset of the Choices program the participants were encouraged to consider new career options that would facilitate their exit from the fishing industry. Specifically, they were being urged to explore the options available for training at Newfoundland public and private colleges or to look for local opportunities to "job shadow". They were encouraged to visit colleges and other places of employment outside the Northern Peninsula because they live in an isolated area where few economic opportunities exist outside the fishery. But within this objective was a seeming paradox. This paradox was well documented by the Straitsview class. The Choices budget allotted $5,000.00 for "job shadowing" and $500.00 for field trip expenses for a twelve week session. With extremely limited opportunities available in the Straitsview area for engaging in job shadowing, the class appealed to HRD for increased funding for travel expenses. Confident the lack of logic in the current budget would be apparent to HRD as well, they were disappointed when their petition was denied

(Interview # 3, 1995).

With only two weeks left in the Choices program the class voiced their frustrations publicly in a letter to the editor of the Northern Pen newspaper. The class informed the editor that they were "upset and frustrated" with the Choices course. They explained the inherent contradictions and shortcomings of the Choices program:

> The contract between Norpen and HRD contains an allocation of up to $5,000 for each Choices Class. The funds could be spent for Job Shadowing, but where do we do job shadowing in the local area with the possibility of future employment. (eg. someone interested in Animal Care Technology, Parole Officer, Or Adventure Tourism could not find a position to job shadow this side of Corner Brook if at all (Interview #3, February 20, 1997).

Their frustration was exacerbated by the unwillingness of HRD to provide an explanation for their decision:

> But the sad thing about this is that they will not give us a written reason why we can't get the money. When we talk about they, we are sponsored by Norpen who are contracted by HRD. There was $500.00 allocated for Field Trips but we haven't got any of that and as far as we know we were the only class turned down. For most of us we are only getting $200.00 a week and can't afford to do much else our hands are tied. Our future looks pretty bleak indeed... We only have two weeks left and still no answers (ibid.).

Criticisms regarding the manner in which funding for field trips for the participants was allocated were reported to HRD as well. He states that "A clause should be spelled out in the contract outlining exactly how much funds are allocated for each class and for what REASONS and this information be

provided to the Groups in writing upon commencement of classes". These concerns were also reported to Norpen College, noting that a Field Trip to St. Anthony by the Straitsview class was actually conducted at participants personal expense.

In regards to the CED component of the Choices program, the relative isolation factor should have also been foreseen as an obstacle to achieving value from this component. In addition, it was demonstrated previously in the I.O.O. program that in this area CED was not viewed as a realistic option. In fact, in the I.O.O. evaluation report it was stated that "no-one" in the St. Anthony area for instance demonstrated any "interest" in CED (Government of Canada,HRD,1994d:32).

Inadequate Resources

One Choices facilitator at the Eddies Coast East site reported that HRD and Norpen, a private college, failed to provide necessary equipment such as a television, VCR, computers and a flipchart until "halfway through the program". In addition, while eventually Norpen did supply one computer it was inadequate to meet the learning needs of the fourteen participants. Similar criticisms were voiced by another facilitator who was forced to borrow materials from the local high school and from friends as well:

> We had little or no resources to use to aid our facilitation. We did receive life skills manuals and some samples of job search materials approximately halfway through the program (Interview # 8, August, 1997).

Another facilitator also documented his concerns regarding this resource material shortage in his final report to HRD and Norpen College. He stated that the "intent" of the Choices program was a "good idea" but the program overall had "some serious flaws from the beginning":

> The program was apparently developed in too short a time. It therefore never had the proper materials and content to provide the participants with the necessary information to make the final decision whether to get out of the fishery or not. Since the major role of the program was supposedly to help participants make CHOICES then the course would have been a total failure, if not for the initiative of the participants and the Facilitators (Interview # 3, February 20, 1997).

He also felt that the format, specifically the interest and aptitude components of Choices, would have been more beneficial at the beginning of the program than near the end.

> Most participants have been out of regular Day School for at least fifteen years and were in need of some basic information. They needed to be given an honest evaluation of the job market both on the local, provincial, and national level and the materials to do so was not provided at the VERY beginning of the course. Participants could have completed the INTEREST and APTITUDE TEST and would have been ready to realistically attempt to decide on their options (Interview #3, February 20, 1997).

This view was reiterated by another facilitator who stated that, "it was absurd to attempt to counsel individuals on new

career paths when comprehension of their skills and ability levels was still undetermined" (Interview # 8, August 1, 1997).

Conclusion

The above discussion shows the inadequacies inherent in both the I.O.O. and the Choices programs. It was shown that these programs failed to meet their stated goal of promoting adjustment amongst displaced fishery workers. Only 732 NCARP/TAGS clients adjusted; a fact that unequivocally indicates the failure of both programs to meet their (adjustment) goals. Despite these obvious inadequacies HRD chooses to claim success and supports further active initiatives.

The following chapter provides an overview of the main thesis argument and makes recommendations for further research in the area of social policy.

Thesis Conclusion

This thesis has examined recent (federal and provincial) social policy reforms that have culminated in a shift from passive to active income support programs, which have become synonymous with various training initiatives. Specifically,

this thesis is a study of NCARP and TAGS; focussing on the active programs I.O.O and Choices, which were delivered under these compensation programs. It also sought to explore the link between active income support and the notion of workfare in the context of an emerging new right movement. In addition, this thesis explored the ideological underpinnings which influenced the current active approach. It has located the origin of the concept of active income support in the context of the self-help philosophy that is commonly associated with the Victorian Era; more specifically embodied in the English Poor Law and the Workhouse.

As well, this thesis challenges the "active" approach and governments' claims of success citing the questionable results of recent studies of active experiments within Provincial social assistance programs. Both the federal and provincial governments in Canada, consistent with social policy trends in the UK and US, have implemented experiments with active forms of income support. As shown in this thesis, these experiments have continuously proven to be an inadequate response to the crisis of unemployment. This thesis briefly discussed some of the Canadian experiments conducted within provincial social assistance programs. It was demonstrated that when these programs are evaluated in terms of their stated goals the results indicate the failure of the active approach. This thesis applied this standard of evaluation to

the federal experiments - NCARP and TAGS, targeted at fishery workers displaced by the 1992, northern cod moratorium.

Beginning with a brief overview of the crises in the Atlantic Fishery, it was shown that these crises have been "typified" by the federal government and others as a problem of "overcapacity" stemming from an over-reliance on the UI program. Basically, proponents of this dependency argument maintain that an overly generous UI program has eroded the Newfoundland work ethic, thus resulting in dependency on income support programs. This argument continues to be challenged by the displaced fishery workers and their supporters. Responding to the 1997 Auditor General's Report that promoted the overcapacity/dependency position, Guy Bridger of the Navigator wrote:

> With regards to over-capacity, you're preaching from the same gospel that we've been hearing for years. There is no over-capacity in the inshore fishery (i.e., vessels less than 65 feet.), but there was over-capacity in the large trawlers and factory freezer trawlers that led us down this road to where we are now. We are the victims, but according to your report we are the problem. This is totally wrong and by telling the general public these myths, you are painting a picture of inshore fishermen which is totally unjust (Bridger, 1997:28).

The formulation of the NCARP and TAGS policies was directly influenced by this dependency argument. Furthermore, these programs are consistent with the evolving social policy reform process underway in Canada since the 1980's which

promotes a shift from so-called passive income support to active income support. This shift is rationalized as a necessary response to a perceived burgeoning national dependence on income support programs. As documented in Chapter two the active concept rests on the argument that passive programs have undermined the work ethic and promoted dependency on state benefits. This dependency argument, as shown in Chapter four, has been applied to those employed in the Atlantic Fishery. Specifically, it is argued by the federal government and others that the crisis in the fishery stems from over-fishing caused by an overcapacity in the workforce encouraged by an overly-generous UI system. As shown in Chapter five and six, active programming is seen by the federal government as the key to resolving this dependency problem. Both of these chapters describe I.O.O. and Choices, revealing the approach utilized to persuade displaced fishery workers to adjust out of the industry.

The active concept, as explained in chapter three, is linked to the philosophy of self-help, generally associated with the British Victorian Era. Self-help is seen as a means of eradicating or lessening character flaws such as, for example, a waning work ethic. This philosophy of self-help was embodied in both the NCARP and TAGS programs in the form of employment counselling. HRD claimed that employment

counselling was the necessary first step to adjustment for the displaced fishery workers. Adjustment, the stated goal of NCARP and TAGS, was defined as the movement of at least fifty per cent of the displaced fishery workers into other jobs outside the fishing industry. An examination of recent TAGS evaluation reports unequivocally indicates that this adjustment goal was not accomplished. Using the I.O.O. and Choices programs it was shown that HRD developed these programs without much planning or forethought as explained in chapter seven. Despite clear indications of failure, as with the social assistance experiments described in Chapter three, the federal government still claims success. As previously noted, the government has chosen to measure success not in terms of the achievement of the NCARP and TAGS' stated goal, but rather in terms of abstract concepts of increased self-esteem and other anecdotal generalizations.

Critics of the active approach warn of the far reaching implications of continuing with active or workfare experiments. Evans and others, argue that these programs serve only to create a "revolving door" in the workplace (Evans, 1995:8). Despite such warnings, governments continue to promote the necessity of the active approach as "conventional wisdom" (Swift and Peerla, 1996:31). Basically this "conventional wisdom" is based on false assumptions and

negative images of the unemployed. Fraser argues that these political images are fraught with inaccuracies that have served to "delimit the range of solutions that are thinkable" (Fraser, 1993:9). Overton expands this argument, maintaining that governments "sustain" and "encourage" these negative images to "serve political-economic ends (Overton, 1992:30). In regards to the case of shifting resources from so-called passive to active income support the "political-economic ends" can be understood in terms of financial benefits to the business community. As interpreted by Shields:

> The shifting of UI resources to training has the support of business, because payroll taxes will be going to something from which companies may be able to derive direct advantage. UI premiums will increasingly become an "elusive training tax", and many employers may come to see them less as a tax than as an investment. However, tying UI and welfare to training will also serve to stigmatize the recipients, and evidence from elsewhere indicates that it will "help reinforce the polarization of work and the growth of non-standard employment". This course of events will shift the cost of economic adjustment onto individuals and public resource and enhance capital's flexible use of work (1996:67-68.)

Can these reforms be stopped or challenged? Peter Townshend encourages sociologists to challenge these recent social policy reforms, arguing that "a concern with social policy must be central rather than peripheral to sociology" (Townshend, 1981:24). Townshend sees the recent reforms as having the effect of "turning the clock back to 1834" (ibid.).

Furthermore, he argues that this social policy time travel has not only been accepted as conventional wisdom by politicians but also by sociologists. Basically, he argues that sociologists need to understand that they are capable of understanding the economic aspects of social policy and that they need to "play a less passive role" in social policy (ibid.:30, 31). Sociologists he argues have grown passive and have simply accepted the ideas put forth by others. As he explains, they are "inhibited for fear of appearing to challenge the professional expertise of economics" (ibid.:25).

More than they of bureaucracy (ibid.:30). This thesis supports Townshend's analysis and recommendations and recommends that further evaluative research be applied to the ongoing active (workfare) experiments in Canada. Specifically, scrutiny of the new counselling initiatives underway within the Department of Human Resources and Employment in Newfoundland would supplement the research undertaken in this thesis and elsewhere.

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