

April 28 1999

Job Submission 203

2 Ross Street  
Plympton POU SA 5038

The Secretary  
House of Representatives Standing Committee  
on Employment, Education and  
Workplace Relations

R1, 116 Parliament House  
Canberra ACT 2600

Dear Sir/Madam

Re inquiry into issues specific to older  
persons, etc

Letter April 19, Letter/Submission  
April 26, 27 ANNE MONTEN

In attachment to the April 26 submission,  
I include copies of job advertisements  
(The Advertiser April 25) in "adult"  
paulours etc, with a query as to the inclusion  
or not of such jobs (in effect are such jobs  
considered mainstream, hence women  
can aspire to such work socially  
acceptably etc?) in the much-vaunted  
ANZ job statistics.

Today, April 28, on local radio ABC SAN,  
an unemployed older worker (female)  
raised the question, specifically referring  
to the ANZ Bank job ads statistics, also  
to find out whether these statistics include  
other such ads, whether there is any  
qualitative analysis. The program  
(to which maybe you can refer) is  
Philip Sakhell (a.m. program), and  
interviews with an ANZ marketing  
Executive revealed that the metropolitan  
newspapers provide the statistics  
and another source (I think consumer  
affairs) suggest the advertisements  
not appear in the newspapers are far  
"legitimate" jobs — the question goes  
to the heart of a concern I have about  
a generally huge focus on quantity  
in all statistical measures, and  
I would ask the inquiry to give

2 Consideration to a need to have far more emphasis on quality, on discovering the nature of jobs being created, so there is a socio-economic guide...

Also raised on this radio discussion was how jobs advertised can be already taken, eg, a caller told of how she applied for a public service position in response to a newspaper advertisement, prepared her application to address the selection criteria, had the application summarised by one of the Jobs Network agencies (where she is on a program), sent it off confident she had presented a good application, and she subsequently received a letter to say her qualifications and so on did not meet the selection criteria, that she did not address the criteria, and upon checkup (to get feedback) she was told the letter was a pro forma response, that the job had actually gone to someone working in whatever organisation - there are some jobs where to advertise complies with a regulation, and I have applied for some where in effect it is all a waste for these days usually 100s of people - another (separate) incident involves a friend (also in SOS) who applied for a job (I assisted her with the application) where it turned out the organisation had advertised, but also used a recruitment service, taking on someone through the recruitment service because (in part) the volume of applicants, of mostly high standard, was beyond their capacity to handle

One reason for my considered (having had a lot of experience with employment agencies to find work over 30 years, here and in UK) scepticism about the Jobs Network is to do with the business of recruitment, where the success of it depends on a constant supply of jobs to be filled, jobs placed in

3 the heads of the agency, then in turn, the people looking for work become the clients, the applicants, and I just cannot see how basically on the fringe agencies, not highly experienced, nor usually, they well-connected with business, often not very professional at all (well-meaning) can be expected to become profitable, in commercial circumstances where employers can recruit from among friends, acquaintances, so the drags become the bread and butter, both of the unemployed (in terms of choice) and the agencies dealing specifically with people unemployed - it makes no hard-headed business sense; I would not go into the employment agency business as a venture, I suspect a commercial analysis (by a bank) would regard it as a poor risk, the market is over-supplied with recruitment agencies, there is cutthroat competition, and, well, I find it mind-boggling, it is \$ millions, not even a pilot study, a complete gutting of the old, without a comprehensive study, now money to be possibly put into it all to prop it all up, again regardless of quality of the jobs not are being handled... an employment agency cannot create jobs, and these Job Network agencies now have a vested interest in survival to keep their own jobs / businesses above water, as, predictably, they do not make money, the money they do make is also possibly out of services not needed by other than those who have never worked, or some of the older unemployed people who have not had previous success, along with being well-educated, etc. There's a danger of dependence in the

4 ones whose income relies on service to the unemployed people who I'd contend could be often capable of looking for work without (often mediocre or worse) assistance, e.g. through the mainstream employment agencies (which also avoided the new scheme)... It is, I'd suggest, likely that to work with the mainstream recruitment agencies could lead to the breakdown of some of the entrenched negative outlook/attitude towards people out of work, and I reiterate the request to consider that the present programs separate the unemployed people, isolate it all out, which is the antithesis of inclusion, of working together.

I'd also ask that you put the issues above partisan politics, a thing that is another obvious way to work, in the interests of better comprehension, and a more inclusive attitude. The current way of behaviour is divisive; we have possibly wasted time and heaps of money through the constant political consciousness feeds into decision-making, and here is, has been both poor morale and the now national cynicism in the system, in the institutions, both as it was (the CES) and as it is — some of it becomes almost habitual, I think, but to be constructively critical is not encouraged generally, let alone among people on the margins.

There is the economic paradox, where the 80s, 90s capitalism is about the bottom line of profit, and here are job losses — occupations wiped out — both through technology and through the quest for cheaper labour —

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So is there to be in future a shorter working life anyway, as the pattern now looks to be — the lack has been in talking of the society, of the socio bit — so quality of jobs, quality of life it'd suggest need to be integrated... It's about people, work is a human endeavour, etc... Is it creative, constructive, in human terms, to have people obsessively doing a "job search", churning around paper, money, often for quite realistically unlikely success? ... which is the case for job applicants of 45 or so + — competing with not only others unemployed (some not with the pressure of it for financial reasons, not all people who wish to work wish/need to do so for money of course) but with people looking to change jobs, and here are many who are on the look out for better jobs, so the bottom end (often the only end for those unemployed) can include lousy jobs where only the pay packet keeps the job/business alive... bad businesses can thrive (sic) in such tough times, businesses where when there's more balance, people won't work — there is much more poor practice now than in the 60s, 70s — lots of people are desperate, only the top end of the corporate/business sector/public service now offers an attractive working life, also the professions — so there's huge work cultural changes, but there's also an expectation breed of the 60s, early 70s for everyone to be able to earn

to a self-supporting wage, thereby have  
the high standard of living that is  
the promise of the consumer society —  
our dilemma is that ~~all are now~~  
included, even at a ~~minimum wage~~  
level — the pattern now is some people  
make it, some not — ~~the pretence~~ seems  
to be current that all can get onto the  
bandwagon, and I find here is  
an unrealistic streak (inclination to  
denial), one I hope will alter by  
his committee being prepared to  
look more than economically,  
and superficially at the human side  
of it, as fellow citizens and  
elected representatives: that you will  
recommend a much bigger  
inquiry into the state of the market  
economy and work culture,  
wealth distribution, etc, to create more  
public participation / understanding  
(so we can learn, know what is  
the situation).

Thank you,  
Yours faithfully

*Anne Montan*  
ANNE MONTAN