

Government Orders

why it is that the Bloc members seem to want to prejudge the consultation and why they do not seem to want to have the people of Quebec as part of this consultative process.

Maybe she can reconcile the irreconcilable of why they want to break up such a wonderful nation with such a great system.

[Translation]

The Deputy Speaker: I must remind the hon. member that she has four minutes left to conclude her speech.

Mrs. Dalphond-Guiral: Mr. Speaker, there is no doubt in my mind that I will make good use of those four minutes to answer the hon. member for London-Middlesex.

First, I thank him for taking the time to listen to me. He deserves credit for being still here at 6 p.m. on a Thursday evening.

The hon. member says he asked me two questions. Unfortunately, I believe he asked only one question because he first said that the Bloc Quebecois wants to destroy this magnificent country. His only question was: Why do we want to destroy this magnificent country since we, of course, recognize that the social security services which exist here, especially since the end of the Second World War, are services which we can be proud of.

Canada is indeed a great country, but it is so great that, somehow, Quebecers feel a little removed from it. Unfortunately, we are different; we have different values which are important to us and, like Canadians, we respect people. Indeed, Quebecers, like Canadians, truly respect the importance of people's health; the difference is that Quebec was able to innovate and break new ground in all kinds of areas. Let me give you two examples. I believe Quebec was the first province to introduce maternity benefits or childbirth grants. Quebec's way of looking at things is slightly different and this is what makes a society rich and special.

What the Bloc Quebecois wants, along with a great number of Quebecers, is to create a new state which will be able to have equal and active relations with its neighbours. I should add that we will be very happy to have Canada as our neighbour, because it is a great country which we respect, and we will also be very happy to have the United States as our neighbour.

I hope that answers the question of the hon. member for London-Middlesex.

• (1745)

Hon. Douglas Young (Minister of Transport): I wanted to put a question to the hon. member. I listened to her speech; she talked about the deficit and Canada's financial problem. I simply wanted to ask her if she had discussed these issues with her colleagues since they have a certain experience with those problems which certainly existed prior to October 25.

I was wondering for example if the hon. member had talked to the member for Saint-Hubert, the members for Richelieu, Longueuil and Rosemont and most of all, the member for Lac-Saint-Jean because these people have a vast experience and were part of the government at a time when all those problems were very obvious for all Canadian taxpayers.

Mrs. Dalphond-Guiral: Mr. Speaker, as time is running short and you were in the country in those days, perhaps you could answer the hon. member's question.

Of course it is important to reduce the deficit, but we must cut where it is logical to do so. It is logical to trim the fat first and for the time being, there are still a lot of areas where we can trim some fat.

You know, in my kitchen, if I throw away some milk because it went sour, I am wasting it. Well, in this great and wealthy country of ours, I think there is still some waste. It is a collective as well as an individual responsibility and members of this House, of this government, who should serve as models, must set an example. I hope I have answered your question.

[English]

Ms. Jean Augustine (Parliamentary Secretary to Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, I join in this debate on the motion of the Minister of Human Resources Development because it is one which will deeply affect the people of my riding and deeply affect all Canadians.

Etobicoke-Lakeshore has fallen on hard times recently. Many of our industries have packed up and left town leaving empty plants and office spaces and many unemployed people in their wake.

We have people capable of providing highly technical knowledge but with little infrastructure for support. The youth in my riding are facing an ever bleak future and it seems that no matter what their training is there are no jobs for them. There are many seniors in Etobicoke-Lakeshore who are living on the edge of poverty and they are all concerned about the quality of life they will have in their remaining days.

My constituents and all Canadians are in a state of despair. They are having a hard time not only finding but keeping their jobs. Many who have jobs are underemployed or work only part time and intermittently.

During the campaign I promised and I committed according to the red book. I committed together with all the members of the Liberal Party who were campaigning at the time that we would invest in people; that we would help individuals to make better choices for themselves and for their families; and, that we would help individuals to establish new ways of participating in a social and economic structure that would make a difference for them.