

Oral Questions

please therefore look seriously at the creation of a representative task force along the lines I have already suggested?

[*Translation*]

Hon. Marc Lalonde (Minister of Finance): Mr. Speaker, as I said earlier, the Government is contributing more money to post-secondary education than it ever did before. By increasing its transfer payments to the provinces, the government is contributing more than the provinces themselves are adding. I think it is clear the Canadian Government is doing its share, and more than its share, with respect to postsecondary education, and this does not include the hundreds of billions of dollars that the Department of Employment and Immigration is investing in training young Canadians to prepare them for the job environment.

Regarding the point raised by the Hon. Member, I may remind her that the Secretary of State consults regularly with his colleagues who are responsible for education, that I myself was discussing the matter of financing health care and post-secondary education with my colleagues, the ministers of Finance, as recently as last Thursday, and finally, that the Minister of Employment and Immigration is also consulting with his colleagues on training programs in this area. The Government of Canada, and I would ask the hon. lady to think about this, has not only done its share but more than its share in this field.

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[*English*]

**DEPARTMENT OF EMPLOYMENT AND
IMMIGRATION**

**AUDITOR GENERAL'S CRITICISMS OF PRACTICES AND DELIVERY
OF SERVICES**

Hon. Bill Jarvis (Perth): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Employment and Immigration who, I am sure, must be deeply concerned about the sometimes bitter criticism of the operations of his Department contained in the Auditor General's Report. Mr. Dye reports the Department does not determine its future human resource needs in a detailed and systematic manner. In other words, it does not identify future job opportunity areas. He then goes on to say that there is an absence of a national strategy to determine whether Employment and Immigration is delivering its services to those who need them most, or whether clients are receiving the most appropriate programs. How does the Minister respond to these criticisms in two fundamental areas—future job creation program potential, which is not identified by the Department, and second, whether the 1.5 million jobless are in fact being delivered programs to meet their needs, or whether the proper programs are being delivered to them?

Hon. John Roberts (Minister of Employment and Immigration): Mr. Speaker, we take the criticisms that have been presented by the Auditor General about the administration

and direction of our programs, very seriously. Over two months ago I did give instructions to my officials to examine each of these criticisms and return to me with proposals on how we could properly respond to them. We have since that time had continuing discussions with the Auditor General about how we might respond to the criticisms which are presented of our programs.

In relation to the first part of the Hon. Member's question, I would like to say that one of the major problems we have in developing the most precise and cost-effective programs for job formation has been, at least until recently, a lack, I believe, of an adequate knowledge base of what job opportunities are most likely to be present in the Canadian economy in the future. It is for that reason that we have moved to the establishment of the occupational projection system. It is for that reason that we have supported financially the Business Council on National Issues and the Canadian Labour Congress in putting together the Labour Market Institute, exactly to give us better information than we have had in the past as to where job opportunities in the Canadian economy, as we look down the next three or four years, are likely to be found. There has been a conscious effort on our part, at least over the past year, and perhaps longer than that, to respond to the kind of concern which the Auditor General has expressed.

EVALUATION OF JOB-CREATION PROGRAMS

Hon. Bill Jarvis (Perth): Mr. Speaker, in addition to alleging that the Department is unable to identify job potential, and in addition to the allegation that it is not delivering services properly to those who need them most, the Auditor General reports that the Department does not have in place the proper method of evaluating what took place within many of the job-creation programs. Therefore, the Auditor General is reporting that the job potential is not known, that the proper delivery is not in place, and there is no method of evaluating. I ask the Minister most seriously does he believe that his Department, on the basis of the Auditor General's Report, is responding to its responsibility in terms of the expenditure of billions of dollars of taxpayers' money, and I believe much more fundamental and important, is he responding properly to the human tragedy of 1.5 million Canadians who are unemployed?

Hon. John Roberts (Minister of Employment and Immigration): Yes, Mr. Speaker, I think I should make it clear, as I perhaps did not in my previous answer, that these problems of definition of job opportunities in the future are not simply problems that have existed within government. They have existed as well within the educational institutions and within the private sector. The problem we have had is not a lack of will on the part of government to act; it has been generally throughout our society a lack of being able to find precisely where those job opportunities are going to lie, partially because of the very openness of the Canadian economy and its sensitivity to fluctuations which are difficult to forecast in the international economy generally.