

policies pertaining to manpower adjustment and occupational training within its borders, and supporting the other proposals put forward? Are you listening to Quebecers as National Assembly members were?

Are you willing to take action in your caucus, in committee, so that this reform can provide any province with a real opportunity to opt out and set up its own program, to have a real employment development policy, and to opt out of existing manpower development programs. The array of federal and provincial labour development programs is the laughing stock of all public services, with their confusing names and objectives. These things have never been properly clarified.

The federal government claims it is making an effort, that we could agree on a set of rules. It is wondering why we on this side are not yet satisfied. It is because the federal government wants control over the guidelines. This means that, every time we want to change the way these programs are run, we must first negotiate a federal-provincial agreement, some kind of administrative agreement.

This is unacceptable, in my opinion. Before any administrative aspect is negotiated, there must be agreements on the substance of the issue, and the Quebec consensus on the need to transfer all federal budgets allocated to this sector and to repatriate control over and management of the various employment services must be recognized.

Quebec now faces a rather special situation. Because the federal government decided to maintain its network of employment centres, it is significantly reducing the number of points of service. This will result in fewer services being provided to unemployed individuals. These centres will serve a larger area than before. At the same time, another network set up by the Centre Travail Québec and the Société Québécoise de la main-d'oeuvre is also active in the field.

• (1335)

In the days before the referendum, this government told us: "Yes, we will take into account the fact that you are a distinct society. We will take into account the aspects that make Quebec different". However, after the referendum, we came back here and it was business as usual. It is always the same thing. The federal government claims to be able to do better than Quebec in the manpower sector. That view is not shared by anyone in Quebec, particularly in light of the results.

The auditor general once said that the federal government did not have adequate control over its employability support programs. These programs are not effective, as evidenced by the fact that one million Canadians are out of work. Yet, the government remains insensitive to this fact and cannot bring

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itself to giving Quebec exclusive jurisdiction over the manpower sector.

I am prepared to bet that, if the manpower sector was delegated to Quebec tomorrow, within about ten years there would be a significant change in attitude. Since the stakeholders would be closer to the field, Quebecers would benefit from a program better integrated with the education network. Ultimately, the existing gap between the number of available jobs and the number of available workers would be filled.

This is where our record is the worst; Canada has an international reputation with the OECD for performing very badly in this area, because we administer things at a distance, with no attention to local needs.

In closing, I would like to invite the federal government, particularly those members representing regions of Canada with economic and social objectives and realities that are different from those of the ridings close to Ottawa, to make their views heard in caucus. This will ensure that regions so desiring may be given the necessary tools for development, and the attitude that there is one mandatory national standard can be scrapped.

It would be heaven on earth if all we needed for automatic bottom-line results was to set standards. If that were the case, with all the standards we have in Canada all of our problems would be solved by now.

Essentially, the solution for Quebec lies in this consensus in the National Assembly, in which all of the parties agreed to the same thing: that Quebec be given control over the tools pertaining to manpower, even under the present federal arrangement. When we have this control, we will be able to get things done properly together. And we are asking our minister of employment—because she has been given the mandate, not only by her government but by the Parliament of Quebec as a whole in the National Assembly—to undertake formal discussions with the federal government aimed at ensuring that this consensus is respected and the interests of the people of Quebec promoted.

The government will be judged on whether it agrees to integrate this consensus into its reform. If it does so, it will have Quebecers' gratitude. If it does not, this will be proof once more that more than 50 per cent of Quebecers ought to have voted yes on October 30, to enable us to finally escape from this unwieldy system which benefits neither Quebec nor Canada.

[English]

Mr. Garry Breitkreuz (Yorkton—Melville, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, I listen to what Bloc is telling us and what it is saying about the government's unemployment insurance program. I have a much more fundamental question that needs to be asked. Why is the Bloc not asking the government why it is not creating more jobs? We go on nattering about why one province does not