

Supply

Canadian workers and their families. They refuse to recognize the fact that the reform is actually helping women overcome barriers to employment as a result of reinvesting in targeted employment measures, daycare and income support.

I for one would like to know why the Bloc members, who were elected to this place to represent their constituents at the federal level, cannot and will not recognize that the proposals will have the effect of better protecting families, and women in particular, and why they are so intent on not giving the plain and simple facts to their constituents. Why do they not at least have the openness to say that, from now on, anyone who has received UI benefits or a maternity leave allowance in the past three years will have access to job search services? Why do they refuse to spread this good news? Could the hon. member give me an answer on that?

Mr. Dubé: Mr. Speaker, I want to make a comment before replying to the secretary of state for the status of women. For reasons of time, I cannot answer all of her questions. However, I want to make an observation. Most of the hon. member's comments had to do with the UI project, while today's debate is on a motion dealing with manpower training.

• (1235)

Through the Chair—since we must always comply with parliamentary rules—I want to provide some information to the secretary of state for the status of women, who asked specific questions.

Why will we, Quebecers and Bloc Quebecois members, not fulfil her wish to see Quebecers accept that the federal government go over the head of their provincial government to deal directly with individuals? That is what she said, they want to reach individual Canadians. The hon. member said that we are really turning this into a power struggle. This is what she is suggesting when she says: "You are turning this issue into a power struggle and, because of that, we, the federal government, have a problem adequately reaching individuals". Such a view truly reflects an attitude which still prevails and which has to do with reaching Quebecers, individually, in fields that come under Quebec's jurisdiction.

The hon. member sees this as a power struggle. Earlier, in my comments, I tried to show the adverse effects maintaining such duplication with have on these same individuals who want to get proper training.

At one time, there were 25,000 people in Quebec seeking vocational training but unable to get it, because sometimes one level of government would not have the required funds, or at other times it would be the other one. The funds allocated to a particular program had run out. There were some 30 federal programs, and approximately the same number of Quebec programs. Confused by all this overlap, the unfortunate individual was sometimes discouraged. Because they kept on trying,

others obtained the information they required, but it was often too late because the funds had run out.

For example, people registering with employability enhancement centres might be asked if they were UI recipients. If they said: "No, I am on welfare", they would be told they did not qualify and should turn to the Quebec government or to Quebec funded agencies. The reverse was also possible for welfare recipients. It is always like that.

I am quite familiar with current federal programs, because I have been studying the issue thoroughly for the past two years, and I can say that only 15 per cent of welfare recipients benefit from federally developed or supervised activities. The same thing can be said about the province, and one must understand the reasons for that situation.

Since welfare benefits are paid by Quebec, even if 50 per cent of the funds come from the federal government, the province was well advised to create programs to help people qualify for UI benefits, which is what they did. When the federal government saw that they were qualifying for UI, it decided to put in place a program to allow them to retrain.

I have been in this House two years now and I know that some of my constituents have signed up for one program after another but are still unemployed because the system failed to meet their needs.

We are exposing that problem and we want it solved. According to the consensus reached in Quebec since the employment forum, only one government, the Quebec government, should have full responsibility for manpower training. That is what Quebec wants.

[English]

The Deputy Speaker: Before debate is resumed, I see the hon. member for Calgary Southeast in her place.

• (1240)

The Chair has been asked to rule on the validity of the amendment made earlier today by the hon. member for Calgary Southeast. Her amendment reads:

That all the words be deleted after the word "prevents" and be replaced with the words "the governments of all the provinces of Canada from adopting a true labour market training policy of their own".

The motion of the official opposition reads:

[Translation]

That this House condemn the government for choosing to reform unemployment insurance in a way that maintains overlap and duplication in the manpower sector and thus prevents the government of Quebec from adopting a true manpower development policy of its own.