

I would have liked the parliamentary secretary to comment on our motion. I can only conclude, with some pleasure, that if he did not do so, it is because he would have had to say, assuming he is in favour of an efficient manpower policy in Quebec: "Yes, you are right. The central government should get out of that sector".

The parliamentary secretary said that Quebec benefited from the UI program. The fact is that Quebec and the Maritimes are the ones that bore the brunt of the 1994 reform. The same is true again with this reform. Indeed, by the year 2001, Quebec alone will have to deal with an annual shortfall of \$735 million, in addition to a reduction of over \$640 million in UI benefits.

I thank the hon. member for finally agreeing with me that the central government had to leave that sector.

[English]

Mr. Garry Breitzkreuz (Yorkton—Melville, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, I have a few brief questions for my colleague from Mercier.

It becomes very obvious to me as I listen to Bloc members that they are interested only in Quebec. Because of that I question whether they should be the official opposition in this matter, but that is simply an aside. We have to take into account the concerns of all Canadians. I have a very difficult time seeing how the concerns she has expressed differ in any way from the concerns all Canadians have. Therefore, I cannot support this motion as it stands.

We all want jobs. She states Quebec wants a vibrant economy and jobs. Is that not true for all of Canada? Should we not be moving toward a policy that addresses this across the nation? She says there is a culture in Quebec. Do we not have a culture in the rest of Canada? Yes we do. That also has to be taken into account.

Why is Quebec asking for control over only the educational aspects of this and not control over the rest of the program? I cannot understand why Bloc members are only picking and choosing some of the things they want. I find that very difficult to understand. Perhaps the member can clarify for me her party's position on this.

I realize that education is a provincial matter. I agree with the member that the provinces should be looking after the training programs because those are truly educational aspects of the program. If that is the case, why not reduce the premiums to the point where they do not include the educational aspect? The government has admitted that by reducing the premiums a lot of jobs would be created. Why is the member not working on that aspect of reducing the premiums and letting the Government of

Supply

Quebec tax its own people for the educational aspects of this program?

• (1045)

[Translation]

Mrs. Lalonde: Mr. Speaker, I shall be brief. First of all, I would like to tell my hon. colleague that yes, Canada does have a culture. What I am saying is that we ought to organize along cultural lines, since the economy, the organization of manpower policy, are linked to culture, after all.

The Quebec National Assembly's demand—I could provide a translation of it, but I guess the interpreter will take care of that for now—goes beyond the educational aspect. What they say, and this was adopted unanimously, is that Quebec must take over the control and management of various services pertaining to employment and manpower development and all programs that may be funded through the unemployment insurance fund within Quebec's borders.

It is, therefore, a matter of jurisdiction and of encroachment, but for the sake of efficiency. We want to take over the overall co-ordination because we can see the inefficiency of the present system and the great needs. Now I am being accused of not speaking for all of Canada. Let me tell you, if anybody has travelled across Canada and given voice to the needs I saw everywhere, it is I.

Except that this morning, with the National Assembly's resolution, I felt it was extremely important to state that these demands have unanimous support in Quebec. I am, however, aware that debates need to be held in Canada on centralization and decentralization. Knowing that I am not able to answer for Canadians on this, I wish that a debate will be held. I think there should be a debate.

In Quebec however, the debate is over; this is the consensus of Quebec, the consensus of a variety of groups, unions, businesses, community groups, and so on; it is true for the province as whole, it is true for the regions. So now we wonder what is keeping this government from giving us back the tools needed for results, instead of continuing along with this unproductive duplication and overlap.

Hon. Lloyd Axworthy (Minister of Human Resources Development and Minister of Western Economic Diversification, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, I am very pleased to take part in this debate on the motion in the House of Commons, particularly since the hon. member for Mercier could be nominated for the Quebec prize for literature, the Prix Athanase-David. Her speech is a great example of fiction writing, and I trust that all of her colleagues in this House will support her nomination after hearing it. This is an excellent example of the Bloc's talent for writing complete and utter fantasy.