

people in securing employment, in the first instance going out and visiting employers to find potential jobs, are different from the one the minister outlined and one which should be considered over time.

Let me ask a similar type question. What kinds of special services are provided in Canada Employment Centres for those who cannot read either English or French?

Mr. Axworthy: Mr. Chairman, we have translators on call for those who have special language needs.

Mr. Hawkes: Can the minister tell me what kinds of special services exist for people who cannot read?

An hon. Member: You should know.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Axworthy: We are using the hon. member as a test case in this respect. Material is available in braille for those who are blind. Special services are provided in that area. For the illiterate, we have the basic skills-training programs, plus many of the LEAP projects which are available for the upgrading of skills. I remind the hon. member that education is under the responsibility of the provincial governments. The primary and secondary school systems are charged with the task of providing basic reading skills. It is a task they fulfil to the best of their abilities. We attempt to supplement them with special programs such as a "Choices" program and counselling services. It is a provincial responsibility supplemented only when we get special needs programs, such as the Outreach program, LEAP, special programs for native training and basic skills training. All those programs are for those with problems.

Mr. Hawkes: The minister moved to training programs that exist, some in co-operation with provincial governments and some of them alone. My question is directed toward the services provided by Canada Employment Centres, the placement services for people who cannot read or write.

Mr. Axworthy: As I tried to outline to the hon. member, we do not discriminate against those who cannot read or write. If someone comes into our office and wants to find a job, we have a counsellor who is prepared to sit down and make an assessment of that person's skills and abilities and the types of job that will suit that person. They are available on a local and regional level. We can plug them into a job bank. If they require retraining, we advise them where that can be obtained. If the basic handicap they face is illiteracy, we recommend programs available in their region which will help overcome their problem. Those are the kinds of services we specifically provide for those with a deficiency. I repeat that the service is provided to anyone who walks in the door.

● (1900)

Mr. Hawkes: Can the minister, in light of the last five or ten minutes, indicate why, in his opinion, one of the fastest growing occupational groupings in Canada today is private placement services and why there has been such an explosion

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of placement services run and funded by provincial governments? In light of his assertion that providing services to everyone should be something that this House supports and seconds, could the minister indicate why he thinks we have this phenomenon of rapid increases in private placement activities, and why we have this rapid increase in provincially-funded placement activities?

Mr. Axworthy: Mr. Chairman, I would suggest one basic reason is that the occupational structure of Canada has diversified. There is far more demand in occupations with specialized needs than there was ten or 15 years ago. It is essential in many cases to provide very highly specialized services for those highly specialized needs. Our programs tend to be broader in their base and we do not deny the value or the utility of other kinds of services. We still provide the basic placement services and, by the way, save private industry hundreds of millions of dollars by the provision of those services. Industries often ask what do we do for them? We provide them with their basic employment services right across Canada saving them an awful lot of money in doing that, and it is money well spent.

Mr. Kristiansen: Mr. Chairman, prior to launching into the subject of unemployment insurance and a myriad of questions arising therefrom, I should like to bring to the attention of the minister a few recent remarks by a former member of this House, the former chairman of the Conservative caucus. These are remarks concerning labour mobility, hiring preferences and the effect upon these, if any, of certain sections of the proposed constitutional resolution. These remarks which, in my considered opinion, constitute irresponsible, ill-considered and mischievous scare-mongering of the worst kind, attempted to suggest that key mobility and rights sections of the proposed constitutional resolution might have the effect of, one, outlawing the closed shop and union hiring; two, preventing mutual agreements providing for a minimum of 10 per cent local hiring access on major hydro projects, for example; and, three, and this one might really blow some minds, disallowing a company, Cominco in this case, from giving hiring preference to the qualified sons and daughters of employees.

I am sure the minister appreciates that working people and Canadians generally are already facing enough insecurities without having to suffer such partisan and self-serving drivel. I am not inexperienced in these areas and, in fact, have spent considerable time dealing with issues of hiring practices, local preferences and studying the history of "freedom of association" clauses in other jurisdictions. It is a non-issue as far as the United States court rulings on union shop rights are concerned.

Would the minister briefly comment on these three Conservative "red-herring" claims, and hopefully help put an end to the needless anxieties and false counsel being spread by members of the Conservative party?

Mr. Axworthy: Mr. Chairman, that is a welcome invitation. I think we have already had an opportunity to see some examples this afternoon without having to go to the former chairman of the Conservative caucus to find one. I would only