

*Government Orders*

We have heard again how this department is reviewing and distilling its 39 programs into a streamlined decentralized set of re-employment tools, tools that respond directly to the needs of Canadians where they live. Decisions can be made in the local communities instead of many miles away in some centralized bureaucracy. The provinces, municipalities, local businesses and organizations can be part of those decisions. They can tailor how federal service will be used to help people in their communities get back to work.

This may sound abstract, but in London, Ontario there is a wonderful example of these policies in action. Last month the minister sat down with community groups and political leaders in London to discuss the creation of a new learning and life centre there.

The London Learning and Life Centre will provide a centralized location for employment preparation, skills training and adult education. It will house a job search centre, an interactive lab for computer training and office space for community service professionals. Even an on-site child care service is planned.

An estimated, and I think this is conservative, 8,000 to 10,000 persons will utilize its services annually in London. The centre began as a community initiative, bottom up, not top down and has enormous community support. Its partner organizations include groups representing women, youth, adult learners, aboriginal people, immigrants and educators. Recognizing the real concerns, the real common sense of enabling local communities to work together for social development, the federal government contributed \$700,000 to the initial stages of the centre's creation.

We heard the minister make clear commitments to build on the success of this decentralized approach, inviting the provinces to sit down and devise new solutions, new ways of working together. This is what the Canadian public wants. We want governments to work together with communities and individuals, new ways to deliver the best possible services, the most effective services to Canadians where they live, not here in Ottawa. This is clearly the right direction. This is clearly the kind of change and the kind of department that we need as Canada prepares for a new century.

The basic philosophy behind the new department, the vision behind Bill C-96, represents something new and very exciting. It is already making a difference in my community and in the lives of hundreds of thousands of Canadians every day throughout this country.

It is up to the House now to ensure that the department can keep moving forward and that Canadians can count on this government's commitment to provide the best possible help in today's economy. Bill C-96 creates the department that can deliver what Canadians need. It creates the kind of department that can make a difference and the kind of department that makes sense.

We have every reason to move forward, not backward, and to put this legislation in place as quickly as possible.

[Translation]

**Mr. Maurice Dumas (Argenteuil—Papineau, BQ):** Madam Speaker, I stand today in this House to address Bill C-96, an act to establish the Department of Human Resources Development and to amend and repeal certain related acts.

The bill gives a legal basis to the Department of Human Resources Development in order to extend the powers of the Minister of Human Resources Development.

• (1115)

Thus, this bill gives the minister the power to circumvent provincial powers in order to establish direct links with local organizations or such other persons he considers appropriate. With increased federal intrusion in social and employment programs, and most particularly, in manpower training, all social or employment related sectors are likely to be affected by federal action. Consequently, with new powers, the minister is interfering with provincial jurisdiction.

In the powers, duties and functions of the minister outlined in clause 6, it is specified that he exercises his power

—with the objective of enhancing employment, encouraging equality and promoting social security—

in matters over which Parliament has jurisdiction.

Clause 20 provides that the minister, within his powers, duties and functions,

—may enter into agreements with a province or group of provinces, agencies of provinces, financial institutions and such other persons or bodies as the Minister considers appropriate.

In the old legislation, the minister only had the power to enter into agreements with a province or group of provinces.

In clause 31.3,

The Commission may authorize any person or body—to exercise powers or perform duties and functions of or delegated to the Commission.

In section 18.3 of the old legislation, the commission could delegate them only to "officers or employees or classes of officers or employees of the Commission or, where the Minister approves, of the Department". It thus has delegation power equal to the minister's.

Quebec partners in the labour market have long recognized the need to repatriate to Quebec federal responsibilities and budgets for manpower.

The 1989 employment forum was a major step in this process. In December 1990, the Quebec Liberal government officially