

*Supply*

either you communicate and achieve something great, or else you shut the door.

Unfortunately, what is happening is that the hon. members opposite are closing the door. They have no interest in helping the Canadian economy. They have no interest in putting the young unemployed from Roberval to work because if young jobless in Roberval find work it will reflect favourably on the economy and the Government of Canada.

[English]

If the Reform Party really wanted to advance the cause of federalism and unity it would focus on the important task of rebuilding the economy and meeting the real challenges of the 21st century.

Canadians voted last October for a message of hope. They voted for honesty and integrity in government. We have made mistakes and we will continue to make mistakes, but by and large the hallmark of this government is honesty and integrity. They voted for an end to jurisdictional wrangling and indeed the Prime Minister is proud that he has promised to focus on a jobs agenda and to stay off the eternal treadmill of constitutional dissension. Ask ourselves the best question: Where else in the world would we rather want to live?

[Translation]

Is it true or not that Canada, in spite of all the problems and challenges, is the best place in the world to raise children?

[English]

It is the best place in the world to grow up. It is the best place in the world to be sick. It is the best place in the world to build a future.

We are moving to tear down those interprovincial barriers. My colleague, the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Industry, is working very hard on accomplishing real tasks to get Canadians back to work.

A Reform Party member laughed earlier about what we were doing with the infrastructure program. I can say that in the Labourers' International Union hall in my riding when they get called to go out to a job they are not laughing. They are thanking God that a Liberal government had the good sense to put in place a very specific and direct job action to get Canadians back to work. That is a case of functional federalism: a country that puts Canadians back to work.

In the space of five months the minister responsible for infrastructure signed agreements with every single province to deliver on specific programs, no mean task.

[Translation]

According to the OECD, this year our economy will grow by 3.9 per cent. That is almost 4 per cent. And next year, the economic growth is expected to reach 4.5 per cent.

• (1540)

Canadians were right when they elected our government. They understood its message. Economic recovery is what will make our country work. The best way to ensure Canadian unity is to strengthen the things which unite us, not the things which separate us.

If you had the opportunity to spend half an hour with my seven-year old daughter, you would see that she shares the dreams and hopes of every Canadian child. Sure, we can put the emphasis on what does not work. Even if this was not Canada, there would still be some bickering between the various levels of government. If the federal government is not involved, then it is a municipality against the province or the region. It is part of human nature to think that things are not going well. It is an obvious thing to do, it is normal and it is even desirable.

But to go so far as to say that the federal system is no longer working, is finished, is not only to show a lack of logic but—

[English]

It is a denial. It is a denial of the real wishes of every single citizen of this country to be given the opportunity to achieve to the best of their ability.

[Translation]

They do not want us to come here to whine, to bicker and to fiddle. They want us to come here to put our country back to work.

You can always find excuses to make it not work, as demonstrated by the motion tabled today.

[English]

Our objective is not to be dragged into the constitutional morass but rather to work with Canadians as we have worked. Last week we signed the first ever Atlantic environmental accord which put Newfoundland, Nova Scotia, New Brunswick and Prince Edward Island together to work with the federal government for positive environmental change. That is about government that works.

We do not need constitutional amendments and we do not need the kind of negative rhetoric of the Reform Party. What we need is a plan to put Canadians back to work to build a better country.

We do not want one language group to succeed over another. English only is not the solution. If one language group succeeds at the expense of another, Canada is not working. When Canada is working every language group has the right and the privilege to be everything they want to be. That is what the Liberal vision of Canada is all about. When I can stand in the House of Commons with a Chinese immigrant who came to this country and is now Secretary of State for Asia-Pacific and is proud to