

Oral Questions

carried out we must rely on the co-operation of both the country of origin and also air lines.

Apparently in this case the co-operation was not forthcoming. That is why we are carrying out an investigation. The new enforcement rules built into the new legislation can be of some substantial assistance.

In the specific question of the hon. member, it is not true that the effect of this case was as a result of any cutbacks in enforcement. The restructuring has been going on to reduce the amount of money assigned to administration. It has no impact whatsoever on field staff who are the key players in this kind of operation.

We are trying to cut back on the administrative bureaucratic side so resources can be freed up for more effective enforcement.

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[Translation]

JOB DEVELOPMENT

Mrs. Francine Lalonde (Mercier): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Human Resources Development.

• (1435)

Last Thursday, as part of a concerted effort, nearly 1,000 groups, civic and community organizations as well as national coalitions in Quebec signed a letter to the Minister of Human Resources Development urging him to: "maintain the regular component of the job development program as long as no other alternative has been put in place".

Does the minister intend to follow up this pressing demand from the signatory organizations, given the essential role these front-line organizations play in their relations with the less fortunate, and in particular people who have no jobs and no income?

[English]

Hon. Lloyd Axworthy (Minister of Human Resources Development and Minister of Western Economic Diversification): Mr. Speaker, I would be very happy to take representations from these organizations because certainly I agree with the hon. member that they play a very important role in helping to combat unemployment.

However I would like to point out to the hon. member, as I have in the past, that we have been looking at alternatives. One of the most important reallocations, redirections, we have been making is to target specifically the problem of youth unemployment.

We all recognize the great tragedy that takes place when young people are unable to get the resources they need to be properly trained, to have access to the workplace, to make that transition between school and work.

Yes, we are making some reallocations but because of the very deep and serious plight of young people, it is a very worthy objective. We will certainly meet with these groups to discuss how they can assist in helping us to meet that objective.

[Translation]

Mrs. Francine Lalonde (Mercier): Mr. Speaker, does the minister not realize on the one hand that these groups have developed an extremely valuable expertise in employability, and in particular in the employability of young people, and on the other hand, as they say, that cuts in programs to develop job skills readiness jeopardize the very existence of essential services to those who have been hit hard, often the hardest, by the last recession?

[English]

Hon. Lloyd Axworthy (Minister of Human Resources Development and Minister of Western Economic Diversification): Mr. Speaker, just to make the record clear, in fiscal 1994-95, the year we are in now, we have allocated over \$800 million of funds specifically for the province of Quebec. That is an increase over last year. There have been no cutbacks. We have increased the funds and we are devoting a substantial proportion of federal expenditures.

I must say that I am very pleased to have the member, the very outstanding and very competent critic for employment matters from the Bloc Quebecois, once again requesting federal involvement and federal resources for employment in Quebec.

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GUN CONTROL

Mr. Jack Ramsay (Crowfoot): Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Justice is using public opinion polls to justify the imposition of harsher gun controls against law-abiding Canadians in his effort to reduce the criminal use of firearms. These same opinion polls support the return of capital punishment.

Is the minister consistent in his adherence to public demand or does he heed it only when it fits his own personal philosophy and that of the Liberal cabinet?

Hon. Allan Rock (Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada): Mr. Speaker, no part of the government's justice agenda is determined or established by public opinion polls.

Our focus during the six months that Parliament has been in session has been in fulfilling the undertakings we made during the campaign by introducing legislation to strengthen the Young Offenders Act, by strengthening the sentencing laws and by