

*Supply*

many contractors and construction workers in my constituency would be very pleased if several hundred social housing units were to be built in our riding. This would be a concrete social measure which would be beneficial from a socio-economic point of view. Unfortunately, members opposite decided otherwise. They chose to leave poor families in slums and instead go for fat and waste. This, for me, will always remain a shameful decision.

When we talk about employment, we must necessarily deal with professional training. In that regard, we are all aware that a significant amount of public money is wasted because of program duplication and the federal government's interference and desire to control and centralize.

For a long time now, there has been a consensus in Quebec to the effect that the federal must delegate all powers to the province regarding this field of jurisdiction.

It has been clearly demonstrated that the vocational training system in place is more and more obsolete. In Quebec alone, \$250 million could be saved every year by eliminating overlapping. The system shows obvious flaws under the pressures of new technologies and new forms of work organization. In fact, the system does not allow individuals to quickly and adequately meet market needs. It is too burdensome, slow, complex and costly. The federal government interference in this field is certainly not conducive to promoting an efficient training system. It is individuals who pay the price for this interference. The system simply does not work. Individuals and labour markets are both adversely affected. We, Bloc Quebecois members, are asking the federal government to completely withdraw from this sector. However, as long as Quebec remains part of Canada and keeps paying taxes, the federal government will have to transfer to the province its fair share of public money. This patriation will finally allow Quebec to train efficiently and quickly its manpower, based on the needs of the labour market.

This is another concrete measure which will help develop the ability to work of the unemployed, and consequently reduce the unemployment rate.

In conclusion, I ask members opposite to take a close look at reality. Good horse-sense should tell them it is time to shape up and have a vision. Look beyond the immediate future. Try to see what the next few years hold; try to see what will happen with labour and consumer markets, services and products of the future, as well as new technologies. Look at all this and try to find initiatives which will make us ready. If you do not undertake this exercise and come up with a vision now, in ten years we will still be building roads to support our economy. I am very aware that this technique was once very profitable for old

parties, but individual workers want more than just using a pick and a shovel for a short while to earn a living.

Our workers are intelligent and they want to be considered as such. University students work very hard for three or even five years to earn their degree. And then what do they find on the job market? Nothing. Absolutely nothing. Yet these people represent our future: they have all the skills and knowledge necessary to rebuild the economy.

I ask the government to open its eyes wide and invest in real employment, as opposed to short-lived programs, so that all these young people can have a future.

• (1610)

**Mr. Ronald J. Duhamel (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Public Works and Government Services):** Madam Speaker, I have some esteem for the hon. member and I was a little disappointed—I understand that she belongs to the Official Opposition—when she made comments like “cut the fat” that feed into people's fears, this dishonesty propagated by members of the Reform Party.

As a former deputy minister, I saw how much fat there was, and there was not so much because we have been cutting the fat for years. This does not mean that we cannot review what is going on to see if we could do better. But I find the suggestion exaggerated, not to say dishonest—that would be unparliamentary. It gives the impression that we could wipe out the debt, the deficit and everything else. I have so much esteem for my colleague that her statement surprises me. If I misunderstood her, she can correct me.

This proposal before us today lacks a certain credibility. It is incredibly gloomy and pessimistic. I would never believe that my colleagues in the Bloc are so pessimistic and gloomy. Frankly, it pains me; I think that I will throw a little party to try to cheer them up a bit.

When they talk about housing, they talk about a certain kind of people and they use what is going on in an attempt to give a very wrong impression. They do not talk about the \$100 million to be spent over two years to repair houses across the country. They do not talk about the \$2.1 million to be used to maintain 650,000 existing homes. They do not talk about the \$170 million in savings. And the hon. member does not know if there might be some social housing initiatives. How pessimistic: everything is dying or falling apart.

What really bothered me is that they do not understand. Do they not listen to what is going on? They talk about the infrastructure program as if it were only about spades and shovels, but she did not study the programs, because there are very few spades and shovels. We are talking about a training network across the country. Is that spades and shovels? We talk about setting up high-tech companies. Is that spades and shovels? Yes, you have to break the ground with spades and shovels