

Government Orders

instead of being divided and dwelling on the past like the Leader of the Opposition did throughout the last referendum campaign.

I challenge the future Premier of Quebec and members of the opposition to lay down their arms and say: "We are willing to work with everyone. We are willing to work with the federal government, the municipalities and, of course, the other provinces". I think it is really too bad that the Quebec government, which claims to be anxious to promote regional economic development, tends to boycott agreements and federal-provincial meetings and conferences.

I think that is too bad, and it is unfortunate that in several sectors, including fisheries and agri-food and agriculture, we see this refusal to meet Minister Tobin and officials and ministers from the other Canadian provinces. I think the Quebec government and especially members opposite will have to consider that people want development, but not if it means Quebec has to separate, not if it means breaking up and destroying the country.

I think that people, especially in Quebec, want to build a fair and credible society, and this will happen within the Canadian federation. In concluding, I would urge opposition members to suggest alternatives, to work with us, but even more important, to work with and for their constituents. I am convinced and confident that their constituents feel it is up to them to work with us to strengthen the economy of Quebec and Canada.

Mr. Antoine Dubé (Lévis, BQ): Mr. Speaker, before he leaves, I would like to congratulate the member for Bonaventure—Îles-de-la-Madeleine for having successfully enlivened the debate this morning to some extent on that side of the House, because, up to now, things were pretty quiet.

Mr. Gagnon: True. True.

Mr. Dubé: He encouraged us to pay attention to and analyze the outcome of the referendum. I would like to return to his recommendation, and look at the outcome of the referendum in his riding. In his own riding—Bonaventure—Îles-de-la-Madeleine—as he knows, it was not the no vote that won, but the yes. So, if he truly spoke for the people of his riding, he would be saying something different. It appears he did not listen carefully. Too bad for him.

I, however, remember. I have listened carefully to most of the speeches by the member for Bonaventure—Îles-de-la-Madeleine. I remember him from when I was a brand new member. There was a debate on the famous ferry that would run between the Magdalen Islands and Prince Edward Island. The solutions proposed by the Government of Quebec were not particularly to his liking. He said: "I will listen to what my people have to say, and, you watch, we will come up with a solution".

• (1255)

The solution the federal government came up with was to buy a secondhand boat from somewhere else, rather than have a new boat built. Since then, the president of the Société de transport des Îles-de-la-Madeleine has been running around after secondhand boats, with \$30 million of federal money. Recently, someone said on his behalf, a representative of the Société said: "Unfortunately, the federal government took so long in the matter, I missed an opportunity. The boat was sold elsewhere. There are no more secondhand boats for sale".

Meanwhile, I know, because we are talking about real problems, we are not talking Constitution, we are talking jobs, I am the member for Lévis, where the Chantier maritime de Lévis is located, and where workers at MIL Davie remember what the member for Bonaventure—Îles-de-la-Madeleine said: "A second hand boat rather than a new one". Hundreds of unemployed workers remember that.

I listen to them and I say to the member, because sometimes we have to raise our voices so the member opposite understands: Not only did you not listen to the people of Lévis, you did not even listen to the people of the Magdalen Islands.

Before you warn me about the relevance of my remarks, Mr. Speaker, I will return to Bill C-96.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Kilger): I simply want to put you at ease. It has nothing to do with relevance. You should, however, always address your comments to the chair, and not directly to each other.

Mr. Dubé: Thank you, Mr. Speaker. You understand that we cannot always resist temptation. I have every intention of following your rules, which I graciously accept because of my great respect for your position.

The hon. member for Bonaventure—Îles-de-la-Madeleine, for example, wonders what the official opposition is worried about, arguing that this bill will not broaden the human resources development minister's jurisdiction.

Not only is the hon. member for Bonaventure—Îles-de-la-Madeleine not listening, but he has apparently not read the bill. What does the bill do? It expands the Department of Human Resources Development. It must be realized that, if we take away the money allocated to debt servicing, it almost exceeds 50 per cent of the federal budget. That is quite something.

It includes the old employment department, the labour department. It is responsible for old age pensions. On this subject, I simply wish to remind the hon. member for Bonaventure—Îles-de-la-Madeleine about the debate surrounding the replacement of many employment centres with computer terminals.