

Supply

put more money into research or technological development, which will mean better service to the public.

Therefore, I am happy to have this time in the House to encourage the minister to analyze the recommendations made to him in detail and to invite him to submit them to the House before any decision is made.

[English]

Mr. John Williams (St. Albert, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, I noted that the member was back on the old rhetoric of the Bloc Québécois that it is so concerned about provincial rights and responsibilities that it wants total control over manpower and training.

Surely the argument is the creation of jobs, the creation of a well trained and productive workforce. The whole argument among different levels of government which may create bureaucratic jobs as the provinces and the federal government fight each other over who shall and shall not accomplish and spend money in what area is totally and absolutely non-productive. The issue should be that we want Canadians to be productive. We want them to be well skilled. We want them to be efficient in order that we can compete in today's international marketplace.

How does the member think that by having the money spent by the provincial government instead of the federal government it is going to achieve any of these particular aims and objectives?

[Translation]

Mr. Crête: Mr. Speaker, I find this question a bit surprising coming from a member of the Reform Party, because it seems to me that part of the answer can be found in an argument they have frequently advanced, which is that, if decision making were truly decentralized in our system, significant savings could be realized.

One of the sad facts of the terrible debt we are now facing is that, in our federal system, it is very difficult for individual citizens to identify who is responsible for what, and as a result they are forever turning to both the provincial and the federal governments for money, hoping that one of the two levels will come through with what their organization needs to function.

There is therefore a rather unhealthy competition between the two levels of government, because their fields of action often overlap. Another aspect is that it is not true that the manpower profile is the same throughout Canada. Quebec has its own characteristics because of the French language and culture of the majority of its citizens, and therefore the mobility of Quebecers is not the same as what may be the case in the rest of Canada.

There are also different choices that must be made in terms of occupation of regions. For example, when the human resources development committee conducted its cross country tour, Maritimers were in dread of a reform that would suddenly bring about an exodus to the west, when what they wanted was to be able to stay in their part of the country, exploring and developing the resources there.

• (1730)

That would lead to very different choices regarding manpower training. A truly pan-Canadian policy really encouraging full-scale mobility to the max would mean that we would train people in New Brunswick or Nova Scotia for jobs in Ontario, Alberta or Vancouver. On the other hand, if we were to keep our manpower training policy to a local scale, if our objectives encourage people to find employment in their own areas, to lead their lives in their current environments, we would make different choices regarding training. We would go size up what resources are available in their areas and what kind of training needs the people already living in an area have. That would make a huge difference.

Take fishermen for example. Given the very inaccurate forecasts made, they became the victims of the overlap in the fisheries jurisdiction. If these people are put in a position in which they have to go back to school to train for jobs in an entirely different region, they will be cut off from the only reality they know and we will be faced with the same problems many southern countries are currently facing.

So, to get back to the hon. member's question, I think that the main solution is decentralization which, in itself, will be much less costly. If provincial governments do make mistakes, if they spend money irresponsibly, it will not take long for the electorate to turf them out. The way things are now, the people cannot actually determine whether the federal government, the provincial government or the municipal government is responsible for such and such a thing. In Quebec, there is overwhelming support in all regions for a massive decentralization of power. This would make it possible to quickly determine who created a situation in particular, who is responsible for ensuring it is a success, and who to praise if it is, or who to blame if it is not. That is one way of getting Canada out of debt.

Mr. Bernard Deshaies (Abitibi, BQ): Mr. Speaker, I was very interested in what my colleague from Kamouraska—Rivière-du-Loup, who is from one of the regions, had to say and I have a question for him, not about decentralization, because he would like to see a move to decentralize towards the regions, but as the Canada human resources centres are formed, we realize there will be some centralization. Because of staff reductions, they are going to centralize staff, which is supposed to enhance efficiency, and they will set up service outlets. Since we are from these regions and, in my opinion and that of my colleague,