

Supply

As far as Quebec is concerned, as a member coming from that province I can say that on this side of the House we are not concerned only with Quebec but with all of Canada and the unity of this country. If members opposite want to help job creation, they have to help us first with the programs aimed at creating jobs all over Canada and stop talking only about the Constitution or splitting up this country.

We have not changed our minds even if we are not sitting on the same side of the House. We are true federalists. Job creation has always been one of our priorities.

Could the member tell me why the current program does not meet the needs of businesses in Quebec or elsewhere in Canada?

Mr. Jean H. Leroux (Shefford): Madam Speaker, I would like to thank my colleague for her statement which seems very honest.

Let me deal first with the infrastructure program. It is true that program was implemented by the new government and it is an excellent program. You all know that what we need now in Canada is job creation.

That program will create jobs, but there are conditions.

• (1705)

First, there are small municipalities, in my riding and elsewhere, which cannot respect all of the program's requirements and have problems obtaining a program because of that.

Second, the infrastructure program will not develop high technology for the future of Canada and Quebec; let me say I am happy to mention the two together because the Bloc Québécois is a sovereigntist party, yes it does want sovereignty, but not a brutal and independent one. We wish to maintain relations with the rest of Canada. Since you are also from Quebec, my province, Madam Speaker, you know there will always be close relationships between Quebec and the rest of Canada.

However, Quebec is different. Everybody knows it. We hear it all the time. Just listen to the people sitting next to us, that is what they say. We are different. The day it will be accepted as a fact, everything will be easier. There is one important thing for the government, for the party in office. The Liberals are in office now, so they are able to consult the most intelligent and most competent persons in Canada and in Quebec and ask them what to do. If the government does not know what to do, it holds the necessary authority to at least do that.

I think the problem with our government is that it consulted a lot without presenting us with a legislative agenda equal to our expectations. As for the DIPP, all I can say is that we are experiencing delays. It is not functioning. Funds are frozen. We have the funds; now we should invest them the right way.

I think if the government is serious, it must consider the motion of the Bloc Québécois and act upon it.

Mr. Eugène Bellemare (Carleton—Gloucester): Madam Speaker, I find it amusing to see the hon. member for Shefford panic and think that things are going from bad to worse in Quebec. That would be true if the sovereigntist government were to go off to sulk in a corner and to do as it pleased. The hon. member did not do his homework. When he did his research, he forgot to read the budget. If he had done so, he would know that the Liberal government will broaden the DIPP criteria to include more industries.

I would like to remind him what Paul D. Manson, a former Canadian Forces Chief of Staff and now the president of Paramax, said about his company: "Nearly two years ago, we created a task force to explore business opportunities in the civilian sector. We identified four or five very promising areas. Our parent company also extended its support and increased our budget for research and development. We answered some calls for tenders and, before the end of the year, we should have good contracts."

The hon. member, who is a sovereigntist and a separatist, should be trying to create a Canadian industrial family, instead of sulking and trying to leave us. He should be doing something constructive and positive, such as creating interactive jobs throughout Canada.

Mr. Leroux (Shefford): Madam Speaker, I listened to the remarks of my colleague and I found them quite cynical. I think both sides of the House will agree that this hon. member's attitude was rather carefree in the past. Contrary to the hon. member, I think that the best that can happen is for Quebec to finally opt for self-determination.

• (1710)

On the other hand, you can quote all the letters from all the company presidents in the world, this will not change the fact that 11,000 jobs were lost in Quebec. Each and every person who was laid off did not necessarily write a letter, but the fact remains that 11,000 jobs were lost. What we want is for the government which was elected to create jobs to roll up its sleeves and finally get things going for the benefit of our country.

Mr. Francis G. LeBlanc (Cape Breton Highlands—Canso): Madam Speaker, I am pleased to take part in this debate today, for a few minutes, and particularly so as a member of the government party.

Since the election, last October, the Liberal government has taken to heart the commitments in our red book, the commitments that had been presented to Canadians after much reflection and debate within our political party.