

*Oral Questions*

This is just an admission that the programs the Liberals have been spending millions on do not work. Now all they can do is say to Atlantic Canadians: "We've cut your benefits and your programs, give up and move to Ontario".

Is the government now asking taxpayers to buy airline tickets for every unemployed Atlantic Canadian?

**Hon. Lloyd Axworthy (Minister of Human Resources Development and Minister of Western Economic Diversification, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, oftentimes the problem with the questions we receive from members of the Reform Party is they are based purely on a meanspirited exaggeration.

We provide a wide variety of opportunities for Canadians by offering training to get jobs, by working with local business to get jobs, and oftentimes by moving to other parts of Canada to get jobs.

I was in Fort McMurray and saw some great work being done by residents of Manitoba, of Newfoundland, of British Columbia in helping to build the oilsands project in that area.

• (1450)

I find it really incredible that the Reform Party, which says it is trying to solve the problem of unemployment, would deny the opportunity for people to be able to get jobs throughout the country. That is what Canada is all about.

\* \* \*

[Translation]

#### REFERENDUM CAMPAIGN

**Mr. Michel Bellehumeur (Berthier—Montcalm, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister will not make a commitment to recognize Quebec as a distinct society as defined in the Meech Lake accord, to give it veto rights or to remove federal spending powers from jurisdictions exclusive to Quebec, and he even refuses to reduce duplication. His position is a direct contradiction of the position defended by the no committee in the brochure distributed to Quebec households by the director general of election.

How can the Prime Minister allow the no committee to circulate a brochure describing a position taken by the no side that directly contradicts the position taken by the Prime Minister, the real leader of the no side?

**Right Hon. Jean Chrétien (Prime Minister, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, we are on the no side, and we have a very clear policy on what has to be done now, and it is to vote in the referendum and stop the political and economic uncertainty hovering over

Quebec and Canada because of the determination of members opposite to separate Quebec from Canada. They do not even have the courage to say they are separatists. In this brochure, the no side has presented a text that reflects the consensus reached by all members of the no committee. Spending powers and so forth are all proposals that were accepted and which the members of the Bloc Québécois turned down. They voted against the Charlottetown accord which included all that. We supported the Charlottetown accord, and this particular text reflects the Charlottetown accord. You were against it. You might as well stop talking because you keep contradicting yourselves.

**Mr. Michel Bellehumeur (Berthier—Montcalm, BQ):** Mr. Speaker, the Prime Minister obviously refuses to correct the information contained in the brochure of the director general of election to make it conform to his position.

Are we to understand the Prime Minister feels very comfortable with the illusory position taken by the no side, since it gives him another chance to cheat Quebecers, as he did in 1980?

**The Speaker:** My dear colleagues, we are starting to use language that is pretty strong, even for the House of Commons. I would ask all members to please tone down their comments. Be very careful with your choice of words.

I will let the Prime Minister answer the question, if he is willing.

**Right Hon. Jean Chrétien (Prime Minister, Lib.):** Mr. Speaker, I am not very impressed by the hon. member's exaggerations, because at a time when we are facing a very serious situation in Quebec, members of the Bloc Québécois and the Parti Québécois refuse to tell Quebecers that they want to separate. In the public opinion polls, 30 or 40 per cent of the people who say they will vote yes believe they will keep their Canadian passports and Canadian citizenship and are convinced they will stay in Canada and that there will still be federal members in Canada. They are not telling them otherwise. They will tell them after the referendum instead of telling them the truth before.

That is why in my speech yesterday I told Quebecers that reality is not a magic wand that will deal with the problems, not a leader who appears and disappears, like the one we have now. He was supposed to come to the House to crush us, and now he has disappeared. Poof, we do not see him any more.

The important thing is to realize that when Quebecers have to pay their bills at the end of the month, they do not need a magic wand but jobs and prosperity. Everyone in Quebec knows perfectly well that the Canadian alternative is the only one that will provide prosperity, security and progress for Quebecers.