

Quebec in the news

René Lévesque:

"The younger generation will decide—"

Madam Speaker, I would like to quote the interview given by the Premier, appearing in *Le nouvel observateur* on page 43, and I quote:

In 1980, we lost the referendum on sovereignty. In 1985, however—when the next consultation will probably take place—, hundreds of thousands of voters among those who had been "scared stiff" at the prospect of separation—especially the elderly—will have disappeared, while hundreds of thousands of young people will become eligible to vote.

This is what Premier Lévesque had to say about senior citizens. Madam Speaker, it would seem that the PQ has added a new chapter to its catechism on the independence of Quebec, namely, the elimination of senior citizens. Unfortunately for our Premier, his words have merely served to make his dissatisfaction with the present situation known to all Canadians.

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[English]

EMPLOYMENT

JOB-CREATION PROGRAM URGED FOR SMALL BUSINESS SECTOR

Mr. Girve Fretz (Erie): Madam Speaker, the funding set aside in the budget for job creation indicates that the Government is attempting to address some of the concerns of the unemployed. However, these programs are far from ideal.

Why must it be that to qualify for grants one must be planning something cute or unusual? It seems that the person with a small manufacturing plant who is not involved in research or promotion is out of luck. Why should money only go to hire people who have exhausted their UIC benefits or who have to qualify in other complicated ways?

The time has come for a simpler program, one that will help small business, and on a permanent basis. Looking at cases which have qualified, it seems that jobs are only being created for periods from a few months to at most one year. After that we are back to square one. What is the point?

It makes sense to me that the money now going to assist in hiring part-time help for make-work programs of questionable value should go to aid businesses in expanding production. These businesses would hire people on a more permanent basis and help our economy to blossom once again. This would be the logical first step to take in removing the mystery from job-creation programs and in helping out the average person on the street.

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EMPLOYMENT

PLEA FOR ALL PARTIES TO CREATE BETTER OPPORTUNITIES

Hon. Stanley Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre): Madam Speaker, I am very grateful to you and to many other persons who had something to say about a birthday I celebrated a week or so ago. I really want to say that it has caused me to do a lot of thinking, to realize that I am 75 years of age and that I have been very effectively involved in things in this country for the last 50 or 60 years.

What impresses me is that persons involved in political efforts should be concerned about the real problems of our time. I am conscious of the fact that some of us have worked on pensions, health, housing, and things like that. If we have been a political force, it is because we have been dealing with something urgent and important. Even if there are ten, 20 or 50 years ahead of us, there are terribly important problems facing us right now, and I think of the question of employment. To me this calls not only for finding money for jobs for a million or a million and a half people who do not have jobs. We must also train people to take part in the kinds of new things which are being developed and will create the kind of life we will know in Canada.

What will be our future will depend very much upon what political efforts we make, not only mine and those of my friends, but those of all of us. My plea is that all Parties in the House take note of this terribly important issue, not only as it concerns funds but as it concerns training to educate people, so that we play a part in building the kind of life we want with the things in it which will make life better for the next 30 years or 40 years. That should be our important goal. It is up to us to do that, and I urge all Parties in this Parliament to make that our most important job.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

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[Translation]

EXTERNAL AFFAIRS

STATEMENT BY FRENCH PRIME MINISTER ON OCCASION OF VISIT BY PREMIER RENÉ LÉVESQUE

Mr. Marcel Dionne (Chicoutimi): Madam Speaker, I would like to draw the attention of the House to what was said by the Prime Minister of France, Mr. Pierre Mauroy, to his Quebec counterpart, Mr. René Lévesque, during the latter's official visit to Paris.

Prime Minister Mauroy, speaking on behalf of his country, emphasized that the special relationship between Quebec and France should in no way be allowed to affect the normal relations France wishes to have with Canada, its long time ally and friend.

Mr. Mauroy also indicated to Mr. Lévesque that the future of relations between France and Quebec must be economically