

*Oral Questions**[Translation]***MANPOWER TRAINING**

Mr. Paul Crête (Kamouraska—Rivière-du-Loup, BQ): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of Human Resources Development.

Clearly the minister is about to make the same mistake with Bill C-96 as the Minister of Industry in the case of Bill C-88 on interprovincial trade, by unilaterally assuming powers that negate the responsibilities of the provinces. I may recall that after scoffing at the objections of the official opposition, the Minister of Industry had to acknowledge his mistake and back down.

If the minister does not intend to go over the heads of the provinces, why does he use clause 6 and clause 20 of the bill to acquire the means to do so? It is there in black and white.

[English]

Hon. Lloyd Axworthy (Minister of Human Resources Development and Minister of Western Economic Diversification, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, we have done quite the opposite.

As I have said in the House before, when the minister of employment was given her new task I immediately wrote and suggested that we negotiate the whole question of the labour market issues in Quebec with a view to taking a look at 75 per cent of the programming we do in that province and developing a different set of authorities, joint planning, and transferring certain responsibilities. The answer from the minister of employment was no, she did not even want to talk about it.

I tried again. I wrote back to her and said let us do a joint study between the SQDM, the Government of Quebec and my government on duplication and overlap. I made the offer, saying that we would jointly pay for it. Again the minister of employment refused to answer.

My point is I cannot force the minister of employment in Quebec to co-operate with me. I would like to have that co-operation. I want to work out how we can get a better delineation of responsibilities. I urge the hon. member to go back and talk to the minister of employment in Quebec and ask her when she is ready to co-operate. As soon as she says yes, I will be there.

[Translation]

Mr. Paul Crête (Kamouraska—Rivière-du-Loup, BQ): Mr. Speaker, apparently the minister would like to be Canada's minister of education. Would the minister agree he is taking the means to circumvent the provincial governments because he wants to establish a national strategy for intervening in manpower issues, which may be acceptable to other provinces but flagrantly contradicts the general consensus expressed many times on this matter in Quebec?

[English]

Hon. Lloyd Axworthy (Minister of Human Resources Development and Minister of Western Economic Diversification, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, it is quite the contrary again. The member should know, because he has been in the House now for two years, that what we have arranged is a very good, co-operative arrangement in the area of student assistance. We have the Canada student loans program. Quebec has its own program.

When we reformed our program this summer and brought in programs to provide specific grants for disabled students and students with high income needs that would enable them to go school earlier, we transferred that money directly to the province of Quebec so it could offer the same programs to its own students. Now that is the notion of flexible federalism: not a takeover, but a way of working in co-operation.

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NATIONAL DEFENCE

Mr. Jim Hart (Okanagan—Similkameen—Merritt, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, my question speaks to the mismanagement at the highest level at the Department of National Defence and is directed to the Prime Minister.

• (1435)

Every day we have seen another leadership crisis in the Department of National Defence. The minister and the CDS are publicly at war. These are Liberal problems, and the government uses the inquiry to justify inaction. The Canadian Armed Forces are demoralized, dispirited, and cannot wait until June 1996 for the government to act.

Why is the government failing to deal with these daily scandals at the Department of National Defence?

Mr. Fred Mifflin (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of National Defence and Minister of Veterans Affairs, Lib.): Mr. Speaker, if there is any demoralization of the Canadian forces I can assure you it is aided and abetted by the irrelevant questions that are put forward by the members of the third party.

Mr. Jim Hart (Okanagan—Similkameen—Merritt, Ref.): Mr. Speaker, the Minister of National Defence has mishandled de Chastelain, Kenward, Vernon, Labbé, and it goes on and on and on every single day.

My question is directed to the Prime Minister. The Liberal government has done nothing to correct the leadership problems at DND. The Prime Minister's confidence in his Minister of National Defence and the Chief of Defence Staff is misplaced. Will the Prime Minister solve the leadership problem and demand the resignation of the Chief of Defence Staff and his Minister of National Defence?