



Agreement on manpower development a positive step. Alliance Quebec

Alliance Quebec considers the agreement on labor force development signed Monday between Prime Minister Jean Chretien and Premier Lucien Bouchard to be a positive step.

Both men seem to have been able to come to terms with Canada's and Quebec's official language legislation without limiting services to some of the most vulnerable of the province's residents, Alliance president Michael Hamelin noted.

"This agreement is a contract between two levels of government," Hamelin said. "It guarantees in the way any contract guarantees that services in this area will be available in English on demand to anybody who requests them.

"We benefit from this contract in a very practical way."

Since these negotiations began last year, Alliance Quebec has insisted that people who need help finding work be served in French or English, counseled in either language, have access to training courses in English and informed of available jobs in both languages. The agreement offers service in English on demand.

"Mr. Bouchard has said that the agreement was in the best interests of all the province's unemployed. We are pleased he is concerned about the members of our community in a practical way," Hamelin said.

"The federal government has obviously listened to our concerns and endorsed them as its own," he added.

To English-speaking people in Quebec, Hamelin said, "the agreement says the services are there. Now we have to use them. If they are not there, let us know. We raised this issue. We will carry it through."