

Oral Questions

department has stated categorically that at least \$500 million must be spent on base metal exploration alone.

How does the government expect to discover the new mineral deposits of tomorrow if exploration is not encouraged today?

[*Translation*]

Hon. Marcel Masse (Minister of Communications): Mr. Speaker, the measures which the hon. member has referred to are part of a package which the government has developed to assist the mining industry by providing it with geological analyses, material research and development, as well as means to improve plant productivity. I do not think that just because a program had to be cut for whatever reason, in this case in an effort to help Canada fight its deficit, the whole geological policy and effort of the Department of Energy, Mines and Resources comes tumbling down. This is only one aspect of a package. I will refer the question to the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources who is very active in all his areas of responsibility, including the mining industry.

[*English*]

Mrs. Diane Marleau (Sudbury): Mr. Speaker, my supplementary question is directed to the Minister of Finance.

If the minister has any intention of maintaining a healthy mineral sector in Canada, that is maintaining a healthy sector in the northern provinces and northern portions of our country because that is where a lot of the mineral reserves are, he must recognize that mineral exploration today is essential.

Does the minister recognize the importance of replacing depleting mineral reserves and, if so, is he committed to finding some type of alternative measure as a replacement to the CEIP?

[*Translation*]

Hon. Marcel Masse (Minister of Communications): Mr. Speaker, I wish to remind my hon. colleague that one of the best ways to help in the development of the mining industry is through flow-through shares. The reason the government has fully maintained the flow-

through shares is to assist in the development of the mining industry.

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[*English*]

NATIVE PROGRAMS

Mr. Robert E. Skelly (Comox—Alberni): Mr. Speaker, every week seems to bring another cut to aboriginal programs. The Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development last fall boasted that the fur industry in Canada out of a total employment of 100,000 supported 50,000 to 60,000 natives and contributed almost \$800 million to the GNP.

Just when Canada is now making headway in convincing the European Economic Community to support the marketing of Canadian furs in Europe, why has the minister's department cut core funding to the Aboriginal Trappers Association by 100 per cent, from \$120,000 to nothing, and to the Indigenous Survival Institute by \$30,000?

Hon. Pierre H. Cadieux (Solicitor General of Canada): Mr. Speaker, considering the new Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development is away on business today, I will try to answer the question from my best recollection.

If I recall correctly, there was a program created through the initiatives of various departments, including Indian Affairs, but also External Affairs and another department, for a number of millions of dollars. Indian Affairs had committed some funds up until this year. The funds, therefore, are not reflected with respect to this year in the Estimates, but I understand that there will be some funds from Indian Affairs.

I am sure that my colleague, the Minister of Indian Affairs will make the appropriate announcement at the appropriate time.

Mr. Robert E. Skelly (Comox—Alberni): I have a short supplementary question, Mr. Speaker.

Given that total government funding to support the fur industry has been cut by about 66 per cent this year, and given that the native lobbying program or native advocacy in Europe has been more successful in turning the situation around there than any other component of the fur industry, why is the minister singling out the native component for the deepest cuts—100 per cent to