

Oral Questions

Mr. Speaker: Despite the subject matter of the question, the Speaker is prepared to invite the Hon. Member for Yukon to ask a supplementary question.

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh!

NEGOTIATIONS WITH UNITED STATES

Ms. Audrey McLaughlin (Yukon): Thank you, Mr. Speaker. I am glad to hear the Minister say that he is going to do something about it. We will be anxiously waiting to hear. We have already lost one season. I hope we can take this as an assurance to Yukoners, and to all Canadians, that we can trust the negotiating ability of the Government to give Yukoners a fair allocation of our rightful resource.

Hon. Thomas Siddon (Minister of Fisheries and Oceans): Indeed, I will repeat the assurance I have given. It appears that the Alaskan based fishery is exceeding the Alaskan quota guidelines by up to 50 per cent. That additional harvest is five times as large as the harvest by our own fishermen in Yukon. That discrepancy must be addressed, and I intend to address it immediately.

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WESTERN DIVERSIFICATION FUND

PROVISION OF NEW FINANCING

Mrs. Mary Collins (Capilano): My question is directed to the Minister responsible for western diversification. First, I wish to congratulate him on his new appointment, and both the Minister and his colleagues on the announcement last week of the \$1.2 billion western diversification fund.

Mr. Speaker: Congratulations are always in order, but keeping in mind the hour I would ask that the Hon. Member put her question succinctly.

Mrs. Collins: There has been some confusion, or perhaps misunderstanding in British Columbia concerning the funding. Under existing DRIE programs, British Columbia receives approximately \$50 million a year. Dividing the \$1.2 billion by four provinces in five years that works out to be approximately the same. Some people are concerned that the money is the same.

Can the Minister clarify and confirm that the \$1.2 billion is new money, and does not in any way preclude funds from ongoing programs of DRIE and other Departments?

Hon. Bill McKnight (Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development): I thank the Hon. Member for the question because it does allow this clarification.

The fund is \$1.2 billion of new money. On top of that, there will be \$200 million transferred to the Office of Western Diversification for IRDP, WTID, and ERDAs that fall within the jurisdiction.

In economic development across Canada this year the Government has spent over a billion dollars, over \$1 billion this year in industry, science and technology, \$1.2 billion for western diversification has been identified, \$55 million has been identified for northern development, and \$1.5 million has been identified for Atlantic Canada. The Government, the Prime Minister and Cabinet have made a commitment to the regions of Canada.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

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INDUSTRY

FIRESTONE PLANT IN HAMILTON—DISPOSAL OF EQUIPMENT

Ms. Sheila Copps (Hamilton East): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of Regional Industrial Expansion. Less than one month ago the Minister told the workers of Firestone, the people of Hamilton, and all Canadians that if any equipment was moved out of the Firestone plant he would immediately ask for repayment of the \$13.5 million that the federal Government gave to Firestone. That was on July 15. Now the Minister is in the process of negotiating an agreement with Firestone that will permit that company to strip its Canadian machinery and equipment and take it down to the United States and leave a barren shell of a company.

What happened between July 15 and today to cause the Minister to have this complete about-face after he gave his word to the people of Canada?

[Translation]

Hon. Michel Côté (Minister of Regional Industrial Expansion and Minister responsible for Industry, Science and Technology): Mr. Speaker, the Hon. Member knows perfectly well that what we have here is a very difficult and very complex situation. We have looked at various alternatives with Firestone. We have identified respective buyers, and we have asked the company to put \$13.5 million, the amount referred to by the Hon. Member, in trust in order to keep all options open and find a positive solution that would keep this plant open, which would be in the best interests of the workers in her riding.

[English]

REPORTED EXPORT TO UNITED STATES

Ms. Sheila Copps (Hamilton East): Less than an hour ago I spoke to one of the officials in his Ministry. There is not a single thing in writing between the Government and Firestone to guarantee any of those jobs or that equipment.

Some Hon. Members: Louder!

Ms. Copps: I will be louder, Mr. Speaker. If the government Members do not wish to hear a voice from Hamilton in