

Oral Questions

WESTERN DIVERSIFICATION FUND

Mr. Nelson A. Riis (Kamloops—Shuswap): The Deputy Prime Minister mentions the Western Diversification Fund as presumably the Government's major initiative to assist and diversify the economy of western Canada. Perhaps he ought to go out to places like Kamloops, Red Deer, Medicine Hat and Flin Flon and explain to the people out there that this Government believes that spending \$32 a year on every westerner is its commitment to western diversification. Is this the \$32 solution for westerners in terms of diversifying that economy?

Hon. Don Mazankowski (Deputy Prime Minister, President of the Privy Council and President of the Treasury Board): Mr. Speaker, coming from a gentleman whose Party supported the National Energy Program which devastated western Canada—

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Broadbent: Wrong again.

Mr. Mazankowski: We certainly do not need to take any lessons from them.

Mr. Broadbent: You have a history problem.

Mr. Mazankowski: Money is money, and whether it comes from Agriculture, Energy, DRIE, or Western Diversification, western Canada is getting a good chunk of this—

Mr. Riis: Thirty-two dollars a person.

Mr. Mazankowski: —and it is using it well. It is stimulating activity.

Mr. Fulton: It is not even enough to buy two cases of beer, Don.

Mr. Broadbent: That is not even two cases of beer per capita out west.

An Hon. Member: That is all the NDP can think about.

Mr. Mazankowski: I simply say to the Hon. Member, because I take the Hon. Member's question seriously and I hope he takes my answer seriously, that the Western Diversification Office is not only providing additional funding, which is the top up, its role is to co-ordinate economic activities and act as a pathfinder, utilizing CIC, Energy, Agriculture, Communications and the various government programs, so westerners can go to Edmonton, Winnipeg or to Vancouver and those decisions can be made on the spot. It is a shift in the decision-making process. It is a co-ordinating role and it is topped up with dollars.

[*Translation*]

TRADE

CL-215T CONTRACT BETWEEN CANADAIR AND FRANCE—
GOVERNMENT POSITION

Hon. Jean Lapierre (Shefford): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Deputy Prime Minister. The decision of the federal Government to favour the Anglo-Italian consortium for the army helicopters has put the French Government in a bad mood and jeopardized a virtually assured contract between Canadair and the French Government for a dozen CL-215Ts, which would create 1,000 direct jobs in Quebec. What I want to ask the Deputy Prime Minister or the Minister for International Trade is this: During his walk in the woods with Prime Minister Chirac, did the Prime Minister apply any pressure to have the contract between Canadair and France signed as soon as possible?

[*English*]

Hon. Pat Carney (Minister for International Trade): Mr. Speaker, the contract discussed is not expected to be ratified during the visit of Prime Minister Chirac to Canada. The negotiations are still taking place on the proposed sale and the final decision has not been taken.

[*Translation*]

INQUIRY WHETHER EVERYTHING POSSIBLE DONE TO
FACILITATE SALE OF CL-215T

Hon. Jean Lapierre (Shefford): Mr. Speaker, while the Minister may reply that the contract was not supposed to be signed during the visit of Prime Minister Chirac, she should know that Mr. Chirac was supposed to visit the Canadair plant because the contract was about to be signed and this was a courtesy visit to finalize the CL-215T transaction, but that after the announcement that her Government favoured the Anglo-Italian consortium, the French have decided to drag their feet. I therefore ask the Minister whether or not the Canadian Government has offered any excuses to the French and done everything possible to promote the sales of the CL-215Ts which could create 1,000 jobs in Quebec?

[*English*]

Hon. Pat Carney (Minister for International Trade): Mr. Speaker, I can assure the House that no apology was given and no apology is necessary in this case. I have met with the French Ambassador to Canada and have explained to him that the procedure was dealt with on technical merits only and that the competing bid passed the technical tests in this matter. I can only repeat what I said. The Canadair sale, about which we are very excited, is continuing in negotiations. We hope to have a final decision soon. It is not related to the helicopter sale to which the Hon. Member refers.