

*Oral Questions*

However, everything that deals with that issue will have to be answered within the process the Hon. Member has referred to, that is the Budget on April 27.

## IMPORTANCE OF PROGRAM TO PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND

**Ms. Catherine Callbeck (Malpeque):** Mr. Speaker, my supplementary question is directed to the same Minister.

How many more times will the axe fall on Atlantic Canada? Our potato producers, our food processors, our fish processors, and other Island exporters need to know what the Government has in store for them right now.

Can the Minister assure the House that Islanders, and Maritimers in general, will not suffer reductions to the Atlantic Freight Assistance Program in the future?

[*Translation*]

**Hon. Benoît Bouchard (Minister of Transport):** Mr. Speaker, I can only repeat what I said earlier and at various times in the past namely that I think the people of Canada, and particularly the people of Atlantic Canada, are very proud of the achievements by the Conservative government in the past four years, which cannot be compared to what was done before.

However, I have to say this: We will continue to act as a responsible government. With regard to the policies you were referring to, the Minister of Finance will answer your questions of April 27.

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[*English*]

## ABORIGINAL PEOPLES

POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION—REQUEST FOR  
POSTPONEMENT OF NEW GUIDELINES

**Hon. Edward Broadbent (Oshawa):** Mr. Speaker, my question is addressed to the Prime Minister. In March of this year the Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development announced a new program for post-secondary education for aboriginal Canadians.

The Minister reiterated in the House yesterday that this program will be put in place on September 1. It is in place already, but it will be carried forward, including the new term, starting in September of this year.

Without exception aboriginal Canadians from one coast to the other have condemned this process, and have appealed directly for a withdrawal of the September 1 deadline, in order that on a bilateral basis a new comprehensive program could be agreed to.

Given his previous commitment to aboriginal Canadians, will the Prime Minister now intervene on their side and say no to the September 1 deadline imposed by his Minister?

**Hon. Pierre H. Cadieux (Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development):** Mr. Speaker, as I have indicated on numerous occasions, I am prepared to enter into the bilateral process in order to review the guidelines that will come into effect on September 1.

I was also very pleased to learn that the Standing Committee on Aboriginal Affairs has decided to review the policy. Obviously, I will be appearing before that committee.

I also welcome the opportunity of discussing with my House Leader the possibility of entering into a debate on an opposition day as early as tomorrow.

## REQUEST FOR EMERGENCY DEBATE

**Hon. Edward Broadbent (Oshawa):** Mr. Speaker, I would like to pick up on the last point made by the Minister, and return to the Prime Minister or to the House Leader.

Earlier this day Your Honour ruled against an emergency debate, adhering to the rules, but indicating that there might be another moment to discuss what the Speaker himself has called an important matter.

I would like to ask the Prime Minister, or the House Leader, in view of what the Minister has stated, will they agree that, when we reach Orders of the Day this afternoon, to debate this important matter this afternoon, which we can do in the House by common agreement?

**Hon. Doug Lewis (Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada):** Mr. Speaker, as my hon. friend the Minister has indicated, the Government is prepared to allocate a day, preferably tomorrow, wherein a debate on this important matter can take place, with the motion properly framed. This will give our colleagues the time this evening and tomorrow morning to prepare for the debate. We would welcome such a debate.

**Mr. Broadbent:** Mr. Speaker, we too would welcome that debate. I suggest that it would have been preferable