

*Oral Questions*

## RENEWAL OF ERDA AGREEMENTS

**Mr. Ron MacDonald (Dartmouth):** My supplementary question is for the Minister of Public Works. Last year was an election year and one that the Minister should take note of because 20 out of 32 seats in Atlantic Canada could not be bought by ACOA.

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. MacDonald (Dartmouth):** ACOA was allocated \$83.8 million for co-operation agreements with the Atlantic provinces. This year that figure has been slashed to \$39.6 million, a cut-back of over 50 per cent.

Can the Minister tell the House, in a year when \$400 million in ERDA agreements have been allowed to expire, how many agreements he really intends to renew with those provinces, at what cost-sharing formula and could he also indicate what moneys have been allocated in future years for these agreements? Or will Atlantic Canada continue to be punished for exercising its democratic right on November 21?

**Some Hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Hon. Elmer M. MacKay (Minister of Public Works):** Mr. Speaker, it was never the intention of ACOA or this Government to buy any seats in Atlantic Canada.

**Some Hon. Members:** Oh, oh!

**Mr. MacKay:** A lot of seats in Atlantic Canada were helped by ACOA, regardless of political affiliations. There will be over \$425 million profiled each year on average to help Atlantic Canada through Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency and ERDAs. As for renewing ERDAs, it will be a matter for the provinces and for line Ministers to decide what their priorities are.

\* \* \*

## NATO

## MODERNIZATION OF NUCLEAR WEAPONS

**Mr. Bill Blaikie (Winnipeg Transcona):** Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Right Hon. Secretary of State for External Affairs. It has to do with the debate going on within NATO about the modernization of nuclear weapons. I have asked the Minister about this before.

The Minister will know that there is growing support for the German position that there should be negotiations about battlefield tactical nuclear weapons instead of the modernization supported by the United States and the United Kingdom. The debate to date has been characterized as one between the Germans, the U.K. and the U.S.A. without there being a clear implication that Canada is even actively involved in the debate.

I want to ask the Minister of External Affairs whether he will now consider supporting the German position that there should be negotiations with respect to this important decision? Surely it is the will of the Canadian people that any opportunity to negotiate the elimination of nuclear weapons or the down-sizing of nuclear weapons should be taken. Why won't the Canadian Government support that view?

**Right Hon. Joe Clark (Secretary of State for External Affairs):** Mr. Speaker, the Hon. Member suggested that the question of negotiation would proceed instead of modernization. I think the Hon. Member understands that that misstates the position of the German Government and indeed of most of the members of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization. There is an agreement supported by Canada, the Federal Republic of Germany and all the government heads of NATO that we should proceed with modernization. The question before NATO now is one as to the timing and balance between modernization and negotiation.

The Government has been involved in discussions and correspondence with other of our allies to work out a way that will allow the alliance to find an agreement enabling us to proceed with modernization and negotiations.

## MINISTER'S POSITION RESPECTING NEGOTIATIONS

**Mr. Bill Blaikie (Winnipeg Transcona):** Mr. Speaker, my worst suspicions are confirmed. You would think from listening to the Minister that he does not know there is the debate raging in NATO about the issue. The issue is the timing. The issue is whether or not NATO should now modernize or enter into negotiations at this time. That is the position we are asking the Canadian Government to support. Perhaps the Minister might do some creative thinking and ask himself how the question of modernization of tactical nuclear weapons could be linked to conventional force reductions, where the alleged superiority of the Soviet Union exists and which is one of the reasons for having the flexible response doctrine.