

One of the important functions of the provincial offices of the Department is to be the first point of contact with Government for the business community. As part of that function they will act as gatherers and disseminators of necessary information on market prospects and requirements. The total effort of the activities I have described is to provide leadership, advocacy, support and encouragement for development of the standard of excellence required by our entire economic thrust, from science to success in world markets.

While I have been talking about the concerns and responsibilities of Industry, Science and Technology Canada, in terms of the broad spectrum of industrial and commercial activity, there are a number of departmental priorities that deserve special attention. ISTC places a high priority on entrepreneurship and the dynamism of the small business community. The national policy on entrepreneurship announced last year will focus the direction of much of the Department's programs and activities.

Another area of special attention is the tourism sector to which ISTC will devote a dedicated effort to promotion of Canada's attractions in foreign markets. ISTC is also responsible for programs to assist native economic development in Canada. As the Speech from the Throne noted, the Government is concerned that our native peoples participate fully in our economy and will be extending its programs to assist native economic development.

[*Translation*]

Finally, Mr. Speaker, ISTC is responsible for economic development programs in Ontario and Quebec. Because this is a large task and because we wish to distinguish regional development from industrial policy, we are setting up a separate agency, outside ISTC, which will serve the regional development interests of Ontario and Quebec.

[*English*]

I began my address with a reference to the opening of the Speech from the Throne. I would like to end with a quote from its conclusion:

As a strong, skilled and confident people, Canadians will find a greater place in world commerce and trade, in technological innovation, and in scientific development and discovery. The first

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task—will be to help prepare the way for this viable and dynamic Canada.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Jim Peterson (Willowdale):** Mr. Speaker, first of all, I would like to congratulate the Hon. Minister on his nomination to a position which is among the most important in the Cabinet. That said, Mr. Speaker, he does not really have the means to do his job.

[*English*]

As the Official Opposition what we are trying to do, quite frankly, is to assist the Minister in getting the means at his disposal to do the job which he has created for himself and which has been set out for him. We are very upset at what we have seen in terms of the lack of priority in funding for his operations. We do not think that he will have the means or ability to carry out his mandate, a mandate which is perhaps the most important of any in the Government today.

The number of employees in the Minister's Department is being cut from 2,618 to 2,260. The operating budget of the Department is being cut from \$216 million to \$179 million. The money the Minister will have available to carry out his mandate is being cut from \$965 million to \$427 million.

Let us first look at regional development programs which are a critical part of the mandate of the Department. The Economic Regional Development Agreements have been cut. It is important that we make a distinction here in what is happening in the Department and what is happening with other development agencies such as ACOA, FEDNOR and the Western Diversification Fund.

On January 18, 1988, the Minister for International Trade (Mr. Crosbie) said in this House: "The Economic Regional Development Agreements will continue at the same rate of spending now in effect". As of March 31, 1989, there was a total of \$1.613 billion in ERDA agreements which had expired and which have not been renewed. This is in spite of the fact that regional economic disparities remain one of the great blights on the Canadian economic scene. For example, in the Province of Newfoundland today the unemployment rate is 18.8 per cent. There are now more Newfoundlanders living outside of Newfoundland than in Newfoundland because they cannot find jobs there.