

are acquiring. The reality is that when a clerk draws up purchasing specifications he or she often specifies a product which is not available in Atlantic Canada. The specification may not be an essential part of the item being purchased, but when specifications are drafted people believe that they are bound to follow them to the T. As part of the regional development effort we must continue to study specifications to ensure that they are broad enough and flexible enough to reflect the capacity of the regions of the country to supply the product sought by the Government.

Another recommendation was that the federal Government should continue to lend its support to the development of large-scale investment initiatives in Canada. One of those initiatives, of course, would be the Hibernia development. I was pleased to read in the papers this week of an indication of a commitment by the Government of Canada to ensure that this important regional development project gets under way in the near future.

The Government is not restricting its support for Atlantic Canadians to the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency. There are many other avenues, but the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency has special funding and special programs. It provides for a local board of directors and input, not only from the board of directors but from advisory groups throughout the region. There is an opportunity for local industrial commissions to tap into expertise and come forward with ideas which they believe to be good for their communities.

That, Mr. Speaker, is far more than I, as a Member of Parliament, thought could be realized in terms of economic development strategy in my first term in Parliament. It is, in fact, a revolutionary change in the attitude toward regional development in this country. I am proud that it was this Government that made that change. We learned from the past and are looking to the future with new expertise and new strategies. I believe that these changes are producing important results. We must realize that ACOA is not a trial balloon.

The Government established the Enterprise Cape Breton Agency in the spring of 1985, which agency reflected many of these principles. It has special development tools including the Cape Breton Investment Tax Credit, the topping-up assistance, and the IRDP assistance. It administers loan insurance and interest buy-down. All of this is reflected in the Enterprise Cape Breton Agency which has been successful. No one has said otherwise. In fact, there is widespread agreement that the Enterprise Cape Breton Agency has been successful and that jobs have been created as a result.

Our economic development efforts in the region of Cape Breton have not been restricted to those instruments available to the Enterprise Cape Breton Agency. The Government saw that the forest resource in eastern Nova Scotia could be developed, that the full potential had not been realized. The Government put in place ERDA agreements which applied to Nova Scotia in general with relation to forestry and a special forestry agreement for the Cape Breton area of Nova Scotia

with a full \$10 million. We put that money into the forests and put people to work to build up the forests which had been destroyed by the spruce budworm and to build a healthier forest.

We did not stop with forestry. We put in place a special Cape Breton Attractions Program designed to bring tourists into eastern Nova Scotia and Cape Breton. We want tourists to come into that region because tourism is a tremendous growth industry in all of Canada, and Nova Scotia is no exception. There is a great opportunity throughout all of my riding to increase the job opportunities flowing from the tourism industry. We put the \$14 million Cape Breton Attractions Program in place in conjunction with the provinces. The idea was to establish special attractions, so-called travel generators, that would bring in Canadians, Americans and people from outside North America to this region of Canada to enjoy our culture, scenery and people. In turn, we will have a stronger economy.

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We have established special agreements to help the agricultural sector and the fishery. We know that more can be done and are prepared to do so.

However, in less than four years tremendous changes in regional economic strategies have occurred in Atlantic Canada, and I am proud to say that it is the Government of which I am a part that brought forward this initiative. I am proud that many of the recommendations put forward by the committee which I chaired a year ago were accepted and are reflected in the regional economic policies of the Government. Those recommendations were put forward and unanimously agreed upon by the committee. We did not fully expect that so many of them would be accepted and acted upon.

I want to pay tribute to my colleagues who travelled throughout Atlantic Canada during the hearings relating to Bill C-103. I want to pay tribute to them for their attention and genuine interest in listening to Atlantic Canadians and supporting a number of amendments affecting this legislation.

One of those amendments relates to the extension of the Enterprise Cape Breton mandate to an area on the mainland side of the Strait of Canso, which includes industrial land in the Town of Mulgrave and thousands of acres in the adjacent municipality of the County of Guysborough.

This was a major and important change. This was one of the primary areas affected by the closure of the Atomic Energy of Canada Limited heavy water plant in Point Tupper. It was directly affected by the closure of an oil refinery during the term of my predecessor, and was directly affected by the closure of a fish plant in the 1970s. This area faced severe economic set-backs in the last 15 years, and the amendment to the Enterprise Cape Breton Corporation Bill means that this area will benefit from those special benefits that this corporation brings to the area. That is consistent with the mandate of the Enterprise Cape Breton Agency that was set up at the time