

Supply

not convinced any farmers that farming is the thing to stay in.

• (1735)

The member alludes to WDO being involved in procurement and the great things it has done for procurement. If he would look at the record, he would see that for all the smoke and mirrors and song and dance, procurement percentages for western Canada have declined during the period of Conservative governments since 1984.

My colleague from the Okanagan tells me that in B.C., which has 11.5 per cent of the population, procurement has gone down from 4 per cent to 3 per cent during the period of Conservative government.

The member says that the Minister for WDO is doing a tremendous job in terms of the ERDAs. I would like to ask him where are those ERDAs? Those ERDAs have not been around for a whole year now.

Forestry is suffering. Mining is suffering. Tourism is suffering. Northern development is suffering. I would like to ask this member how in the face of that can he say that this Conservative government is sympathetic and supportive of regional development when the facts say that that region is going down the tubes. The kind of structures that we need by way of infrastructure, economic structures, interest rate policies and public fiscal policies are all heading us even further down the tubes. How does the member respond to that?

Mr. Bjornson: Madam Speaker, first, the hon. member expressed some concern about the fact that there seemed to be some loss of population in the province of Saskatchewan. I am glad the hon. member moved out there so that the number was not quite as high as it should be. I do not know how long "all these years" are, but I imagine there is a certain amount of experience up there in northern Saskatchewan.

I think possibly the member just maybe missed the fact that I talked about \$242 million which was brought forward by the government which is to be handled by Western Diversification which is to be shared equally by the four western provinces. I do know, as I said in my

comments earlier, I am more than impressed with the attitude of both the provincial governments and the federal government, how they are working together to solve this problem.

He makes some comments about the concern of deregulation in the transport industry. In the areas that I represent, which is rural Manitoba, somewhat like the area the hon. member represents in rural Saskatchewan, there does not seem to be a problem. In that particular industry there seems to be trucking companies popping up all over the place. Maybe you do have a problem in that area. I cannot speak to that, but I can speak for Manitoba. That is not a problem in my area.

Mr. Gauthier: Madam Speaker, I would like to put a proposition to the House. This has been a very interesting day. I am sure that the interventions have been very constructive. The Liberals would like to have one more speaker on this day. It has been our day. We only had three members today up to now speaking on this debate.

I have the member for Nunatsiak who has his speech and who would like to speak for northern Canada. I think that the House would benefit hearing from him.

I wonder if there would be a disposition, Madam Speaker, to give the member for Nunatsiak a chance to make his speech and then adjourn the House. I can give you my undertaking we will not be doing anything to prolong the hour past his regular 20-minute allocation.

The Acting Speaker (Mrs. Champagne): The Speaker is quite prepared to hear the hon. member, if there is unanimous consent from all three parties.

Mr. Whittaker: Madam Speaker, certainly I think it is important that the member be heard. Given that, I believe that we in this party would be more than happy to agree with the proposition put forward, on the understanding, of course, that the co-operation from this corner be noted when it comes time for some of our motions.

[*Translation*]

Mr. Danis: Madam Speaker, speaking on behalf of the government, we agree with the suggestion made by the hon. member for Ottawa—Vanier.