

Supply

● (1130)

The representation that I condemn has also been condemned by the Nova Scotia Minister of Development, a Tory Minister. He has castigated his federal MPs for not doing their jobs. It could not be any clearer than what came from the First Ministers' conference, that is, that nothing for the region was recommended by those Members in either the November, 1984 statement or the May 23 Budget. There is no representation, none whatsoever, just bodies.

Mr. McCain: Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask the Member why he was not making these representations when he was sitting on the Government side of the House in the presence of two former Premiers from Atlantic Canada and two in the other place. These representations were not made at that time when there should have been competent representation from those Members on that side when they were sitting here. Why did he not mention in his remarks this morning that the payments to various funds benefiting Atlantic Canada were increased in the Budget by \$500 million when compared to the Budget presented at the time he sat on the Government side of the House, supported by, we presume, four former Premiers of Atlantic Canada?

Mr. Dingwall: Mr. Speaker, the hon. gentleman might want to review some press clippings and speeches I have made with regard to development in Atlantic Canada.

Mr. McCain: When you were in Government.

Mr. Dingwall: Perhaps he would avail himself of that opportunity if he would like to take the time. As well, I was on the record very clearly when we brought in legislation regarding changes to the Department of Regional Industrial Expansion. I said very clearly, like my colleague from Egmont, that those changes ought to be reviewed on a 12-month basis, and if it is not working, it should be scrapped. That is what we said when we were in the Government. If there were mistakes made in the past to which the Hon. Member has alluded, then for God's sake—

Mr. McCain: You made them.

Mr. Dingwall: —do not make the same mistakes. Two wrongs do not make a right. The Hon. Member cannot have it both ways. He talks about increments in transfer payments.

Mr. McCain: Half a billion.

Mr. Dingwall: Half a billion. That is not going to suit your province, which will have a \$17 million cut-back in transfer payments. It will not suit the Province of Nova Scotia, which will have to resort to user-fees in its hospitals and will have to jack up tuition fees in its universities, fees which are already the highest in Canada. It is painfully obvious from the question coming from the Hon. Member that there is no representation on the federal side. That is very clear from the question he raises and from its tone.

Mr. Jardine: Mr. Speaker, I have a brief comment. It is difficult to sit here and listen to the Hon. Member for Cape Breton-East Richmond (Mr. Dingwall) make such broad-brush statements on Atlantic Canada.

Mr. Dingwall: They are the facts.

Mr. Jardine: Broad-brush statements. It is very difficult to do so without making reference to my own particular riding. That Member is the spokesman for a Liberal Government which wanted to close Canadian Forces Base Chatham. However, it was this Government, of which I am a member, that saved that base and some 350 jobs. Had that base been closed there would have been a decrease in the population of my riding of some 3,000 people.

He also talks about inaction on the part of this Government of 15 months while overlooking the inaction of his Government, certainly in my riding, for the past 16 years. Over the last 12 months housing starts in my riding have been up 187 per cent. That was unknown in the past 16 years. I could go on and on but I know you want to give the Hon. Member time for rebuttal.

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): Very short rebuttal, please.

Mr. Dingwall: I guess it is fitting that that Hon. Member at least rises in his place and poses a question.

Mr. Boudria: For the first time.

Mr. Dingwall: Not necessarily the first time, probably the second. However, it is good to have him raise a question. He talks about his constituency but fails to mention it is his Government which refuses to act on the proposal we put forward regarding Renous, New Brunswick. However, I am not suggesting he would like to mislead the House in the broadside he just delivered. It is also particularly fitting for this Member to have asked a question because he wanted to deindex family allowances. It was his Party who was in favour of deindexing senior citizens' pensions. However, is this Hon. Member now standing in his place and saying that the Premier of New Brunswick is wrong when he says the federal Government has cut back on regional economic development and is cutting back on transfer payments? Is that what the Hon. Member is trying to—

The Acting Speaker (Mr. Paproski): I regret that the Hon. Member's time has expired. Questions and comments are now terminated.

Mr. George Henderson (Egmont): Mr. Speaker, I have looked forward to participating in this debate on the motion put forward by my colleague from Cape Breton-East Richmond.

Mr. Boudria: A very distinguished colleague.