

## REQUEST FOR GREATER CLARIFICATION ON ROLE OF MINISTER

**Mr. Herb Breau (Gloucester):** Mr. Speaker, I would like to ask the Prime Minister a supplementary question.

How can the Prime Minister state in the Speech from the Throne, that the mandate of the Department of Regional Economic Expansion will be strengthened, when he has just told me that his government has not taken any decision at cabinet or at Treasury Board level, without necessarily giving me the exact amounts that his government intends to spend, until the end of this fiscal year and during the next, through the Department of Regional Economic Expansion?

**Right Hon. Joe Clark (Prime Minister):** Mr. Speaker, I do not have with me today the exact figures from the budget of the Department of Regional Economic Expansion. The hon. member has raised another matter. He suggested that the only way to have an efficient regional economic development policy is to spend money. In our view, a more efficient way of ensuring economic development is for the government to consider all the implications of every action aimed at regional economic development. That is the policy of our government, which I am forced to recognize is a change from the policy applied by the former government with which the hon. member is associated.

[English]

## AGREEMENTS SIGNED WITH NEWFOUNDLAND

**Mr. George Baker (Gander-Twillingate):** Mr. Speaker, in the absence of the Minister of Regional Economic Expansion, my question is directed to the Prime Minister. Is the Prime Minister aware of any new agreements which are being signed with the province of Newfoundland, and whether these agreements will follow that provincial government's priorities totally?

**Right Hon. Joe Clark (Prime Minister):** Mr. Speaker, I am not aware of any agreements which are being signed with the government of Newfoundland. That is not to say that there are not agreements which are ready for signature and which might be within the specific knowledge of the minister who, unfortunately, is away from the House, in Nova Scotia.

## DISCUSSIONS WITH NOVA SCOTIA ON STEEL INDUSTRY

**Hon. Allan J. MacEachen (Cape Breton Highlands-Canso):** Mr. Speaker, I want to take advantage of this series of questions on regional development to ask the Prime Minister about discussions which have taken place between his government and the government of Nova Scotia with respect to the steel industry in that province, with which the Prime Minister is familiar.

The Prime Minister may recall that at the request of the government of Nova Scotia, the former government allocated the sum of \$50 million for rehabilitation of the plant. I would like to find out whether that obligation is still in existence and

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whether that money is still available to the government of Nova Scotia for the rehabilitation of the plant.

**Right Hon. Joe Clark (Prime Minister):** Mr. Speaker, I regret that, once again, I am not able to give as detailed an answer as the Minister of Regional Economic Expansion could give. I do not know the exact state of the discussions between the government of Nova Scotia and the Minister of Regional Economic Expansion, except that there remains a continuing commitment on the part of this government to aid in the strengthening of the steel industry in Cape Breton.

[Translation]

## REQUEST GRANTS BE GIVEN TO ASSIST ESTABLISHMENT OF NEW INDUSTRIES IN QUEBEC

**Mr. Yvon Pinard (Drummond):** I have a supplementary, Mr. Speaker. Around 1975 the Department of Regional Economic Expansion signed a subsidiary agreement with the province of Quebec under which eight cities in the province of Quebec were to be selected as sites for regional industrial parks, and the infrastructures are in the process of being completed in those eight cities, those eight industrial regional parks.

Is the Prime Minister prepared to go along with that policy so that industries will get grants to fill those industrial parks which, in certain cases, are white elephants, and to that end is the Prime Minister prepared to state clearly in the House today that the Minister of Regional Economic Expansion will have an increased budget because he is not a member of the inner cabinet but, rather, a member of that scattered outer cabinet which meets only about once a month and does not seem to have all the influence he would require to implement the principles he states publicly?

**Right Hon. Joe Clark (Prime Minister):** Mr. Speaker, I do not want at this point to go into the organization of the government. We now have some 30 ministers with influence whereas there was only one in the former government.

As to the specific question of the hon. member, once again I will have to consult with the minister responsible to find out exactly what the situation is with respect to the commitments that were made or are being made by the government. I believe the hon. member knows there will be a meeting between the representatives of the Government of Canada and the representatives of the province of Quebec, on November 5, to discuss priorities in the economic development of Quebec which both levels of government could pursue together.