

Oral Questions

Mr. Speaker: Order. The Hon. Member has had, I think, quite a sufficient preamble and I would ask him to put his question.

Mr. Hopkins: —responsible for procurement of the White Paper. Will the Deputy Prime Minister, or some other referee, take charge of the Cabinet until it can agree on its aims and objectives relating to the national interests of Canada? The Ministers are obviously divided and do not know what is in the best interests of the regions of this country. The Minister of Supply and Services says it is a failure.

Hon. Don Mazankowski (Deputy Prime Minister and President of the Privy Council): Mr. Speaker, there is certainly no curtailment on freedom of speech in this Party, and I notice the same thing applies to the Party across the way. The Liberals have certainly been expressing various points of view.

The fact is there is no difference in the points of view held by the Minister of National Defence and the Minister of Supply and Services.

Mr. Tobin: Who are you trying to kid?

Mr. Mazankowski: There is no question that the Minister of National Defence is as concerned about regional industrial development as the Minister of Supply and Services.

Mr. Rossi: You are bluffing, Don.

Mr. Mazankowski: The fact is that the Minister of National Defence is 37 years old and has spent his lifetime being concerned about regional development, and the Minister of Supply and Services has said she has spent 37 years being concerned about the welfare of the regions of this country. In total, that is about 74 years of deep concern.

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REGIONAL INDUSTRIAL EXPANSION**ATLANTIC OPPORTUNITIES AGENCY—FUTURE OF DEPARTMENT**

Hon. Edward Broadbent (Oshawa): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Deputy Prime Minister and concerns the Department of Regional Industrial Expansion. We have seen the extraordinary experience for the first time, to my knowledge, in Canadian history, that a Department has gone through its total fiscal allotment for one year in two months. It is an extremely serious situation.

The Prime Minister is announcing that a special Atlantic Opportunities Agency is being created for regional development in Atlantic Canada, and there is an unanswered rumour that the Department of Regional Industrial Expansion itself is going to be abolished this summer. People in Atlantic Canada, northern Quebec, northern Ontario and the West want to know about the future of this Department. Will the Minister

clarify once and for all whether or not the Government plans to maintain a Department and Minister responsible for regional development and accountable to the House of Commons?

Hon. Don Mazankowski (Deputy Prime Minister and President of the Privy Council): Mr. Speaker, as I indicated in the House earlier, and as the Minister responsible for DRIE has indicated, DRIE is in business. It is honouring its commitments. It will meet every single commitment it has made for this year, for next year, for the year after that and the year after that.

Mr. Rossi: You won't be there any more.

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Mazankowski: Insofar as the concern the Hon. Leader of the socialists has about the Atlantic Opportunities Agency, I regret very much he finds disagreement with the thrust of the agency. I think from his vantage point, sitting in Oshawa, he would probably take that kind of view, but I just simply report to him that *The Chronicle Herald* of Halifax had this to say about the establishment of the Atlantic Opportunities Agency, and I quote:

At last, with the creation of the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency, this region will have a single body in place to deliver federal assistance to an eager business sector. The ACDA, with an annual budget of \$200 million, will be based in, and controlled from, Moncton. It will be headed by a very senior civil servant, Donald McPhail, who will run his own show—that is, he will control the purse strings without having to consult bureaucrats in Ottawa.

• (1130)

That is what Atlantic Canadians want. That is what we support.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Broadbent: I can tell the Minister that I was in Atlantic Canada yesterday. The people in Atlantic Canada are not at all impressed by this misleading Government that has already cut \$1.5 billion on an annual basis from going into Atlantic Canada and expects the people there to think that the Government is being generous because it is only giving back \$200 million. They can see that this is like a thief taking a thousand bucks and asking people to be happy if he gives \$200 back. I can tell the Minister that the people of Atlantic Canada are tired of being conned by this Government. I tell the Minister to go down to Atlantic Canada where he will find that out.

STUDIES OF DEPARTMENT'S EXPENDITURES

Hon. Edward Broadbent (Oshawa): Mr. Speaker, I want to ask the Minister to answer some questions about the future of this Department. The Hon. Member for Yorkton—Melville was trying to get answers here yesterday. He was told to go to committee, where he was stonewalled.

Will the Minister assure us that the internal study that is being done in the Department and the Price Waterhouse study