

*Oral Questions*

counter-productive guidelines for job development projects under the Canadian Jobs Strategy. Specifically, these guidelines require the project participants must have been jobless for at least 24 of the last 30 weeks. This means that in seasonal and high unemployment economies some well qualified unemployed may be denied the chance to compete for new jobs.

In two cases, the Big Trout Lake training program and the Wawatay television training program, flexibility is a necessity to recruit the best possible candidates for these ventures.

● (1415)

I realize that guidelines offer valuable consistency and fairness to a program, but they should not retard or limit any group's potential for success. I ask the Minister to consider exempting these organizations from guidelines and to review similar concerns as they may be brought to her attention. In the interest of successful job creation, this suggestion is worthy of positive consideration and prompt action.

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## ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

[English]

### REGIONAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

#### PROVISIONS IN BUDGET

**Right Hon. John N. Turner (Leader of the Opposition):** Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Finance. The largest cut in the federal Budget is that of \$6 billion in the regional development envelope for 1987. That is the envelope which helps create jobs and opportunities in the less wealthy regions of the country.

Why are the areas of the country with the worst economic problems being asked to bear the majority of the regional burdens imposed by the Budget?

**Hon. Michael Wilson (Minister of Finance):** Mr. Speaker I hate to point it out again, but the Leader of the Opposition is wrong.

**Mr. Crosbie:** As usual.

**Mr. Wilson (Etobicoke Centre):** I think he should get new researchers if he is not going to do the work himself. In 1985-86 the amount was \$12.465 billion. This is on page 31, Mr. Speaker. In 1986-87 the figure will go down to \$11.080 billion. I think that is a reduction of about \$380 million.

The cause of that reduction is the elimination of unnecessary subsidies to business which are primarily focused on the more well-off regions of the country. We did everything we could possibly do to avoid cutting spending in the worse off areas of the country. I am sure the Hon. Member realizes that through the Atlantic Enterprise Program we have put a greater focus on Atlantic Canada because of the high unemployment rates there.

### GOVERNMENT POLICY ON DISADVANTAGED REGIONS

**Right Hon. John N. Turner (Leader of the Opposition):** Mr. Speaker, the figures I was quoting were the 1984-85 figures of the previous Government which projected \$14.7 billion for 1987. That has been reduced by the present Government to \$9.8 billion. Those are the facts which I happened to look up myself, Mr. Speaker.

[Translation]

Why must the poorest regions of our country bear the brunt of deficit reduction? If the Minister is unable to treat taxpayers and individuals with fairness, why does he not extend fair treatment at least to the many poor regions of Canada?

[English]

**Hon. Michael Wilson (Minister of Finance):** Mr. Speaker, the philosophy and policy of the Government are to provide funds to those who are greatest in need. That is the philosophy which flows through the management of our economic and regional development programs. We have removed subsidies which are no longer necessary in the better-off parts of the country and directed the savings to those parts of the country which need them most, such as Atlantic Canada. The Atlantic Enterprise Program is the best example I can give of what we have done in the Budget to reinforce that philosophy.

**Mr. Turner (Vancouver Quadra):** Mr. Speaker, I will have an opportunity to deal with that later in the afternoon.

### PRINCIPLE OF REGIONAL EQUALITY

**Right Hon. John N. Turner (Leader of the Opposition):** Mr. Speaker, the Canadian Constitution now provides for regional equality as part of the substance of our Confederation. Why is he abandoning the principle of equal opportunity for our regions in the recent Budget?

**Hon. Michael Wilson (Minister of Finance):** Mr. Speaker, it is quite clear that the Leader of the Opposition was not able to adjust the questions which he prepared before he came into Question Period. The responses to his first two questions clearly indicate that we have done no such thing. We have not abandoned any emphasis on regional development. Far from that, we have increased it through the Atlantic Enterprise Program as well as through the benefits which we are providing to those in northern Canada.

**Ms. Mitchell:** What about British Columbia?

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[Translation]

### THE BUDGET

#### REQUEST FOR CLARIFICATION OF REVENUE AND DEFICIT PROVISIONS

**Mr. Raymond Garneau (Laval-des-Rapides):** Since the Budget speech, Mr. Speaker, several facts have contradicted