

*Oral Questions*

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

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• (1420)

### REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT

#### NEWFOUNDLAND—REPORTED CUTS IN PROGRAMS

**Mr. Francis G. LeBlanc (Cape Breton Highlands—Canso):** Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Prime Minister. Despite the Government's cynical manoeuvre of delaying the federal Budget until after tomorrow's election in Newfoundland, Newfoundlanders and all Canadians now know that they will be the victims in the Government's deficit-cutting mania. If the Government is not planning to make the drastic cuts to regional programs suggested in today's St. John's *The Evening Telegram*—

**Mr. Speaker:** I think the Hon. Member would want to put his question.

**Mr. Leblanc (Cape Breton Highlands—Canso):** Mr. Speaker, if the Government is not planning to make the drastic cuts to regional programs, will he assure the House and the people of Newfoundland before they vote that regional development programs for Newfoundlanders will not be cut?

**Hon. Elmer M. MacKay (Minister of Public Works):** Mr. Speaker, I have already read a list of some of the agreements—

**Mr. Turner (Vancouver Quadra):** Didn't take you long. It is pretty short, isn't it?

**Mr. MacKay:** Well, it is longer than yours.

Some Hon. Members: Hear, hear!

**Mr. MacKay:** I applaud the interest in regional development of my colleagues opposite. I can understand why they have that interest. However, they should recognize and be fair about the fact that this Government has given more assistance of a better type and quality than any other Government in history, and they will have to wait for a few more days, as will people who are interested in other areas of Government, the proper way to do this under the budgetary process, to get all the answers they want.

ASSURANCE REQUESTED THAT NO CUTS WILL BE MADE

**Mr. Francis G. LeBlanc (Cape Breton Highlands—Canso):** Mr. Speaker, in *The Evening Telegram* article, the spokesman for the Government estimates that the budget for the Industry Department will be slashed, leaving only \$250 million in discretionary funding, from a \$1.3 billion annual budget for regional development programs. Is the Prime Minister prepared to deny these revelations and confirm to Atlantic Canadians that spending on regional development programs will not be slashed in next week's Budget?

**Hon. Elmer M. MacKay (Minister of Public Works):** Mr. Speaker, the Hon. Member should realize that it does not do much good to read reconstituted articles from *The Toronto Star*, even if they are reprinted in Newfoundland or in any of these, as we would say, upper Canadian papers that are speculating.

**Mr. Crosbie:** Where are your Newfoundland Members? All five of them have disappeared. Where have they gone?

Some Hon. Members: Oh, oh!

**Mr. MacKay:** The Hon. Member will realize that the commitment—Mr. Speaker, I don't believe they want to hear the answer.

**Mr. Speaker:** The Hon. Minister's colleague seems to have gotten into this question period. The Hon. Minister may want to respond.

**Mr. MacKay:** Mr. Speaker, all I can tell my colleagues opposite is that this particular effort for this current year in regional development assistance is the most comprehensive of any year yet. They will have to wait until after the Budget is brought down and they can ask their questions then.

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### ABORIGINAL PEOPLES

#### FUNDING FOR POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION—REQUEST FOR DELAY IN IMPLEMENTATION OF PROGRAM

**Hon. Edward Broadbent (Oshawa):** Mr. Speaker, my question is addressed to the Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development. As the Minister will know, until April 1 of this year, the Government had in place an educational program for the aboriginal community at the post-secondary level that was at least working and acceptable. Then the Government of Canada unilaterally imposed changes to it.