

increased consultation between different levels of government and between government and citizens and, sixth, an outlining of Department of Regional Economic Expansion policies so that they may be fully assessed by the public and appreciated.

I believe it is incumbent on the government either to accept or reject the recommendations of the Atlantic Development Council. If the government persists in its policy of ignoring these recommendations, in view of the lack of regional development strategy for the region and in light of the department's persisting in an ad hoc approach to the problem of the chronic unemployed of the region, I believe it is incumbent on the government to ask for the resignation of the members of the Atlantic Development Council.

• (10:20 p.m.)

It seems to me that the recommendations outlined in the press report are exactly what are needed for the region. They contain a ten-year development strategy for a region which is facing chronic unemployment despite the fact that the government has poured substantial funds into the province.

I believe, as do others—including the Atlantic Economic Council, economists in the region, members of provincial governments, and so on—that this approach is exactly what is needed. In other words, there must be a planned approach whereby new jobs can be created and the necessary monetary and fiscal framework prepared by the federal government within which this strategy can be operated effectively. In the absence of a policy statement by the minister on the observations of the Atlantic Development Council, I believe it is incumbent upon him to say exactly what his own policy is. Otherwise we can only

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assume that he and his principal advisers have no confidence in the members of the development council.

Mr. John Roberts (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Regional Economic Expansion): The hon. member for St. John's East (Mr. McGrath) has suggested we should either accept or reject the advice given by the Atlantic Development Council. I think it would be more sensible to study the suggestions thoroughly before deciding whether we ought to accept or reject them. No doubt we shall accept some of the recommendations and reject others.

As the hon. member indicated, it is obvious that these suggestions are wide ranging in a complex field. They deserve the careful study they are receiving. As he knows, there has been a turnover of senior personnel in the department and it is not surprising that the study of a report of such scope should take a considerable amount of time. Certain of the proposals have already been implemented.

I should like to draw the hon. member's attention to the announcement by the minister on October 21 of the establishment of two new programs the creation of which was specifically recommended by the council. I refer to the Atlantic region labour education centre and the Atlantic management institute. It might encourage the hon. member if I tell him there will be a formal meeting between the minister and the members and officials of the council in mid-January. At that time the minister will be exchanging views with the members on the major features of the report.

In light of this, the hon. member's assumption about a need to seek the resignation of the council does not reflect the view of the government, which is treating the report as a matter of valid concern which we believe will make the programs of the department even more effective than they are at the present time.

Motion agreed to and the House adjourned at 10.27 p.m.