

If this is so, has the minister made any commitment to sell the federal government's share of oil to any of the partners in Syncrude? If so, to which one?

**Hon. Donald S. Macdonald (Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources):** Mr. Speaker, dealing with the hon. member's questions in reverse order, no commitment was made, at this point, to sell any part of the production in 1978 or 1979 to any party in Canada. The hon. gentleman will be aware that the law in Alberta requires that that oil shall be sold in the first instance to the Alberta Marketing Commission. With regard to operating costs and available shares of oil for the participants, this question will be decided in the same proportion as the proportion borne by each interested party in the over-all capital cost. In other words, operating costs will be borne in the same proportion as investment in the project and the oil will be available in the same proportion.

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### STATISTICS CANADA

#### POSSIBLE BREACH OF CONFIDENTIALITY OF INFORMATION— GOVERNMENT POSITION

**Mr. John Wise (Elgin):** Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce who reports to this House for Statistics Canada. My question is prompted by a current news item which appeared in a quarterly agricultural publication, in which it was indicated that Mrs. Sheila McFadyen, a research economist for the Food Prices Review Board, hopes to take a private peek at Statistics Canada confidential reports. I ask the minister if he is aware of Mrs. McFadyen's intentions and whether Mrs. McFadyen has been permitted to have access to and refer to confidential reports. If so, would such access not violate the provisions of the Statistics Act which provide for severe penalties for violations of the act and which are designed to protect the confidentiality of answers submitted.

**Hon. Alastair Gillespie (Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce):** Mr. Speaker, I thank the hon. member for giving me notice of this question. I have looked into the subject and there is no truth to the allegations with respect to breach of confidentiality, having a peek, and so on. Indeed, I am not even sure if she has had any contact with the department. I emphasize again to the hon. member, and other members, that Statistics Canada operates under the Statistics Act which protects the confidentiality of information provided by individuals and only provides information in aggregate or summary form.

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### REGIONAL ECONOMIC EXPANSION

#### REQUEST FOR STATEMENT OF POLICY CHANGES TO ELIMINATE REGIONAL DISPARITY

**Mr. Heward Grafftey (Brome-Missisquoi):** Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of Regional Economic Expansion whose main responsibility, I understand, is to reduce regional disparity in this country. The

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urgency of my question is based on recent statistics brought to my attention which show that unemployment in the Chicoutimi-Lac St. Jean area is running at 20 per cent and over, whereas in your own riding, Mr. Speaker, in the Sudbury area, it is under 3 per cent.

**Some hon. Members:** Oh, oh!

**Mr. Grafftey:** My question to the minister is this: As, since the beginning of the DREE program under which billions of dollars have been spent, regional disparities in this country have greatly increased, what major policy decisions and changes is the minister prepared to implement in his department?

**Hon. Donald C. Jamieson (Minister of Regional Economic Expansion):** Mr. Speaker, I am sure the hon. member would not expect me to answer him in detail at this moment. We have made a couple of changes in answer to representations from the hon. member who thought sufficiently of the effectiveness of regional development initiatives to have the whole of his riding included. I agreed to do it, and I would do the same thing to other parts of the country as well, if necessary.

**Some hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Rodriguez:** Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order.

**Mr. Speaker:** The hon. member for Brandon-Souris.

#### SEKINE BICYCLE PLANT, RIVERS, MANITOBA—REQUEST FOR ACTION TO OFFSET EFFECT OF BUDGET PROVISIONS

**Hon. W. G. Dinsdale (Brandon-Souris):** Mr. Speaker, now that I have the undivided attention of the House—

**Mr. Rodriguez:** On a point of order, Mr. Speaker—

**Mr. Speaker:** Order, please. The hon. member for Nickel Belt seeks the floor on a point of order. I will see him as soon as the hon. member for Brandon-Souris has asked his question.

**Mr. Dinsdale:** Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Regional Economic Expansion. It arises from the lay-offs at the Sekine bicycle plant, which is part of the Oo-za-we-kwun project at the former Rivers air base in Manitoba. In view of the substantial investment of the Department of Indian Affairs in this program, which is part of its native workers employment scheme, and in view of the investment by DREE of \$350,000 for a bicycle frame plant, what action has the government taken to offset the drastic effects its budget will have on the economic viability of this project.

**Hon. Donald C. Jamieson (Minister of Regional Economic Expansion):** Mr. Speaker, so far as the budget reference is concerned, I think the question could more appropriately be directed to the Minister of Finance. I am advised, however, that the changes with regard to tariffs were not of a significant nature with respect to this company. I have been in communication with them. If, however, it is shown that there will be some very serious detrimental effects, it may be possible to implement other measures. At the moment I am not aware, despite the