

In a weak economic region like Atlantic Canada the effect of the national Government unilaterally terminating moneys to the citizens will be real, obvious, and immediate. There is no fairness, Mr. Speaker. That is not what the Constitution says under Section 36. Members opposite who were here for the debate on the Constitution will recall what that section says. It talks about equal opportunity for all Canadians, regardless in which region of the country they live. I am ashamed that the national Government is pursuing that route. I am ashamed of the Government Members of Parliament and, from my perspective of, the weakest federal cabinet representation from Atlantic Canada in the history of Canada.

The Government may want to laugh and try to push aside the effect of the role of the national Government, whether in terms of transfer payments or regional economic development. However, I will read a few lines to give Hon. Members a better appreciation. This is what they say:

The federal Government's presence in the region, along with transfer payments, have also contributed substantially to closing the gap with the national average on a number of fronts in the provision of public services. For example, between 1962 and 1979 the Atlantic provinces moved considerably closer to the national average in health and education expenditures. Newfoundland, for example, now has a per capita education expenditure level within 7 percentage points of the national average. In the health field, its per capita spending moved from 46 per cent of the national average to 81 per cent in the same period.

If those are not clear, unequivocal facts with regard to the importance of transfer payments to the Canadian mosaic, I do not know what is.

It does not stop there, Mr. Speaker. With regard to transportation, Bill C-75 singles out Atlantic Canadians to bear the brunt of cost increases. What about the federal Department of Regional Industrial Expansion? There was a \$450 million cut in that Department, and now there is another \$2 billion cut-back by the national Government. Where is the equity and fairness? There is no fairness. That is clear and obvious. I could go on with program after program. Housing has been absolutely devastated.

Let me conclude by asking what the Government has done. I opened my remarks by referring to the trickle-down theory of economic for Toronto, Montreal, and Ottawa. The Government has lived up to that. It provided a \$500,000 capital gains tax for the wealthy in the country. It provided a \$2 billion bonanza for the multinational oil companies. Because of its incompetence, it has provided a \$1 billion bonanza for our banks. The Government is going to build a \$500 million ship. That, in my view, is a totally wasteful expenditure. The Government has increased taxes for low and middle income Canadians who will be paying an additional \$1,500 by 1990. The Government tried but failed, because of the persistence of this Party, to cut the pensions of our senior citizens.

The motion is clear and unequivocal. The facts are clear and unequivocal. The action and lack of action by the Government is clear to the people of Atlantic Canada. The Government has abandoned the people of Atlantic Canada and has not demonstrated any political will to create the jobs and economic opportunities that Canadians have a right to expect.

### *Supply*

**Mr. Baker:** Mr. Speaker, I would like to make a short comment. I must congratulate the hon. gentleman on his speech and on his motion, which reads as follows:

That this House condemns the Government for its abandonment of the people of Atlantic Canada in its demonstrated lack of the political will to provide jobs and other economic opportunities to the people of that region.

While the Hon. Member was speaking I was thinking about the gross negligence to which he referred. I was informed this morning that the Government of Newfoundland has made representation to the federal Government that it would pay for the mothballing of the Come-by-Chance oil refinery. In a private communication to the federal Government, the Government of Newfoundland said that, if required, the people of Newfoundland will pay the entire cost to the Government of Canada, through Petro-Canada, to mothball that refinery to prevent a contract being awarded by Petro-Canada to scrap it.

The hon. gentleman mentioned the signing of agreements. Under the Atlantic Accord we have only until February 11 to get industrial capacity in place because that is the trigger date for that agreement. We are supposed to see a Bill in the House but we have not seen it or any notice of it. Just imagine the Newfoundland Government having to suggest that it will use the money of Newfoundland taxpayers to mothball a refinery! Petro-Canada has informed the Minister that it does not want to do that but wants to scrap the refinery. In the same proposition communicated privately to the federal Government yesterday the Government of Newfoundland said that it would be willing to buy the refinery if all else fails.

This certainly drives home the point of gross negligence which the Hon. Member made. He said that there has been no responsibility shown by the Government and that there has been a lack of attention. As the hon. gentleman asked, where is the federal representation? Will the Hon. Member tell us where the federal representation is that we are supposed to have from Atlantic Canada?

**Mr. Dingwall:** Mr. Speaker, I will make a brief comment and then try to answer the Hon. Member's question. He must understand that the national Government is not putting forward its policies by accident, but rather by design. It is very clear what those policies are.

The Government wants the people of Atlantic Canada to migrate out because this is a centralist, elitist Government. The Government wants several communities in the country to form what it believes to be the new Canadian mosaic. People in Newfoundland do not really count as far as the Government is concerned. People in New Brunswick, Nova Scotia, and P.E.I. do not count because such are the social policies of the Government. If you cannot get a job in Atlantic Canada in the private sector, you go to Toronto, Montreal or Ottawa. The policy thrust is to have the people migrate out, and this was designed purposely rather than by accident. Unfortunately, those so-called representatives from Atlantic Canada, whether they be back-bench MPs with very little to say about economic policy, or cabinet Ministers, are not prepared to stand up for our region.