

of the Atlantic Provinces Economic Council which is being held. In view of the criticisms of the DREE programs, describing them as crude, unsophisticated and unco-ordinated, and the statement by the minister's own former deputy that the results of the DREE programs have been disappointing, is the minister in the process of assessing the programs of his department and does he intend in the near future to announce any revamping of the programs in light of criticisms which have been levelled at them so far?

• (2:30 p.m.)

[Translation]

Hon. Jean Marchand (Minister of Regional Economic Expansion): Mr. Speaker, I have followed fairly closely what has happened in the Atlantic provinces. It is true that the department has been criticized, with reason, I believe, in some cases. We shall remedy what is wrong.

Obviously, the hon. member has forgotten part of it, because even the chairman of APEC has stated that he supported the department and that, on the whole, he was satisfied, even if there were deficiencies.

At any rate, the report that was published includes some very serious errors, and we are considering all that. We shall, no doubt, correct what needs to be corrected. But to claim that, as a whole, the programs of the department have been inefficient is to make an altogether gratuitous statement based on prejudices.

[English]

Mr. Douglas: In view of the fact that the chairman and others indicated that their main criticism was levelled at the fact that the programs were ad hoc and were lacking in long-term planning and co-ordination, does the minister intend to make a statement to the House regarding any long-term targets which his department is establishing and, if so, when may we expect such a statement?

[Translation]

Mr. Marchand (Langelier): Mr. Speaker, we do a lot of planning with the Atlantic provinces and it would take too long to enumerate all the cases. I do not feel that I ought to do it now. I shall certainly have the opportunity of indicating to the House to what extent we have worked with the provinces in order to achieve long term objectives. This opportunity will no doubt be offered to us in the near future, and I shall seize it with pleasure.

[English]

ATLANTIC PROVINCES—REQUEST FOR INDICATION OF DEPARTMENTAL GOALS AND STRATEGY

Mr. David MacDonald (Egmont): In view of the fact that not only the recent APEC report but an earlier and much more direct report of the minister's own agency, the Atlantic Development Council, suggested a strategy and some specific goals with regard to the development and economic improvement of the Atlantic region, and as the latter report has been on the minister's desk for some months, I wonder when the minister will be in a position to indicate to the House and to the people in the Atlantic provinces what particular goals and strategy will be acceptable to his department and to the government?

Inquiries of the Ministry

[Translation]

Hon. Jean Marchand (Minister of Regional Economic Expansion): Mr. Speaker, we have already accepted several recommendations made by the Atlantic Council, among others the establishment of a management institute as well as a labour institute. We have accepted several others, but it would take too long to list them. Some appear to us to be unacceptable and unrealistic. The APEC report contains gross errors. For example, it is mentioned that there is an extensive centralization in the department—

Mr. Speaker: Order. I do not think that the minister now wishes to make a general statement. We should allow the hon. member for Malpeque—

[English]

The hon. member for Malpeque has a supplementary question, then I will return to the hon. member for Egmont.

RENEGOTIATION OF PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND DEVELOPMENT PLAN

Hon. J. A. MacLean (Malpeque): In light of the fact that the development plan which is in force between the government of Canada and that of Quebec with regard to eastern Quebec has been amended and extended, I believe, and also that consideration is being given to doing the same with regard to the development plan in north-eastern New Brunswick, has there been any request from the government of Prince Edward Island to renegotiate or amend the comprehensive development plan which applies in that province to make it more effective?

[Translation]

Hon. Jean Marchand (Minister of Regional Economic Expansion): Not to my knowledge, Mr. Speaker. The agreement with Prince Edward Island was renegotiated barely a year ago. Elections were held shortly after and the people seemed quite satisfied.

In any event, as soon as the government of that province makes a request, we will be happy to discuss the matter with the minister responsible, should he feel that there are weaknesses in the present program.

[English]

ATLANTIC PROVINCES—REQUEST FOR INDICATION OF DEPARTMENTAL GOALS AND STRATEGY

Mr. David MacDonald (Egmont): Perhaps the minister did not hear me correctly. I was referring to the Atlantic Development Council, which is his own agency, not to the Atlantic Provinces Economic Council. In view of the fact he has indicated that some of these recommendations may have been implemented and some are not acceptable, and since there has been no clear statement from either him or his officials as to what the over-all view of the department is as to the effect of this strategy, could he indicate, not in detail now, when he might be in a position to make a clear statement and also whether, in view of the many questions raised about consultation with regions, any steps are going forward to consult adequately with