

*Oral Questions*

We will maintain this year's level of spending. In addition, we are committing \$1.05 billion to the region through this new agency.

In the last year for which we have figures, that is the year 1985-86, per capita spending under regional development in Newfoundland was \$122 per year as compared with \$4 per year per capita in Ontario. Those are the facts.

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**NATIONAL DEFENCE****COST OF NUCLEAR-POWERED SUBMARINE PROGRAM**

**Mr. Derek Blackburn (Brant):** Mr. Speaker, I have some questions on the Government's White Paper on Defence, but I think it is absolutely deplorable that the Minister of National Defence is not here to defend his paper, that the Associate Minister is not here, and that the Secretary of State for External Affairs is not here.

**Some Hon. Members:** Order, order!

• (1425)

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

**Mr. Crosbie:** You wouldn't be here if anybody had any use for you somewhere else.

**Mr. Speaker:** The Hon. Member for Brant, I know, has a serious question. I would tell him that reflections on Members being here or not being here is, of course, improper. Members often have other very pressing matters to attend to, and that applies equally to cabinet Ministers.

**Mr. Blackburn (Brant):** I will put my questions to the Deputy Prime Minister, not to the Minister responsible for the Post Office, of all things, Mr. Speaker.

The Minister of National Defence has only given an estimate of the sail-away cost for nuclear submarines. Will the Deputy Prime Minister now inform us or reveal the total cost of the program, which includes new training facilities, two crews per submarine, and the infrastructure needed to service each of the nuclear subs?

**Hon. Don Mazankowski (Deputy Prime Minister and President of the Privy Council):** Mr. Speaker, the Hon. Minister of National Defence is away from Ottawa on government business. The Secretary of State for External Affairs is attending the Summit in Venice.

**An Hon. Member:** What about the Associate Minister?

**Mr. Mazankowski:** The Minister in charge of the Post Office, the Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs, is quite capable of answering all of the Hon. Member's questions.

**COMPARISON OF OPERATING COSTS**

**Mr. Derek Blackburn (Brant):** Mr. Speaker, the Minister of National Defence heralded the nuclear submarines as the greatest thing imaginable for Canada's defence policy. Is the Minister aware that a Canadian Defence Quarterly appraisal said of conventional submarines "That the cost of the capability gained"—that is the return on investment—"is better than for any other major warship" and that "the defence of our waters in the Arctic can be achieved without going into the enormous expense associated with the large nuclear attack type submarine"?

**Hon. Harvie Andre (Acting Minister of National Defence):** Mr. Speaker, the Minister of National Defence acknowledged that nuclear submarines cost 1.6 times as much as conventional submarines. For that expenditure you get at least three times the capability in defence commitments, as a platform. It was on that basis for maximizing the defence capability per dollar of expenditure that the decision was taken to look to the acquisition of nuclear submarines. They are a very effective weapon system. For our commitments to NATO they will be very, very useful, and they will give good value to Canada for the money.

**TOTAL COST QUERY**

**Mr. Derek Blackburn (Brant):** Mr. Speaker, my final supplementary goes back to the first question that I put to the Deputy Prime Minister.

Can the Minister in charge of the Post Office inform the people of Canada what the total cost of this program will be? I am not talking about the sail-away cost of some \$500 or \$600 million per boat, I am talking about the total cost of the nuclear submarine program, a figure we could not get from the Minister of National Defence on Friday. Maybe the Post Office could tell us.

**Hon. Harvie Andre (Acting Minister of National Defence):** Mr. Speaker, as a result of this White Paper at least the defence people will soon have more people in uniform than I have in the Post Office.

**Mr. Blackburn (Brant):** I don't doubt that.

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

**Mr. Andre:** No one can obviously give the detailed cost of expenditures—

**Mr. Blackburn (Brant):** Somebody has to pay for them.

**Mr. Andre:** Of course they have to be paid for. The expenditure plan was laid out in the White Paper—

**Mr. Blackburn (Brant):** No it wasn't.

**Mr. Andre:**—the minimum of 2 per cent real growth over the next 15 years. Within that context the equipment required, including surface ships, tanks, minesweepers, minor war