

municipal services, roads, industrial parks and much more that can be found in all parts of the nation as a direct result of the dynamic initiatives taken by the Government through the early 1980s. It was then that the Government recognized that the time had come for a bold initiative to build even more effectively on the base that was laid by DREE. The Government is now continuing that initiative.

It is more than upsetting to hear people deliberately attempt to misrepresent the facts. It is upsetting to hear the word "condemn", which is contained in today's motion, and it is upsetting to hear all that gloom and doom when indeed millions and millions—yes, billions—of dollars have been designated and approved for expenditure to assist the areas which need this assistance so urgently at this time. Support for the regional economies of Canada is and must remain a fundamental principle of the federal Government. If the federation is to have real meaning, it must at the same time associate this diversity with efforts to ensure that the Canadian economic market operates as effectively as possible. To attempt this in any other way would be foolhardy to say the least.

The reorganization of the federal Government Departments and the regional policies which flow from it mark a fundamental initiative to promote effective federal policies that serve the dual objective of ensuring that there are no barriers to trade and of ensuring that there is support for the maintenance of strength and vitality in the regions so that the nation can achieve a better balance and become more efficient on the economic common market. The key to the significance of the reorganization lies in the fact that for the first time in history, support of regional development is the goal of an integrated thrust of all the federal Government's economic development forces.

Through the reorganization, the Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau) has required that all Departments strengthen their organizational and programming capacities in the regions. The job of keeping a keen supervisory eye on regional interest and development and making sure that regional views are properly taken into account when formulating national policies was transferred to the Minister of State for Economic and Regional Development (Mr. Johnston). As a central agency, the Ministry is in a position to ensure that regional concerns and priorities are brought to the attention of Ministers and are central to policy or program funding decisions.

To meet the challenge of the new regional emphasis, the Minister has opened regional offices in each province. These offices are headed by senior officials who are called federal economic development co-ordinators. Indeed, in the month of May of 1984, I am pleased to say that in my Province of New Brunswick there is a very senior, capable and able civil servant heading this responsibility, not only on the MSERD and economic growth and development side but also on the regional industrial expansion side. Mr. Patrice Blanchard is carrying out these responsibilities in a very efficient way, as is his counterpart, Mr. John McNaught, who represents the Department of Economic and Regional Development in New Brunswick. Both of these gentlemen have taken on their responsi-

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ties in a way which will see the implementation of these policies and programs carried out in the efficient manner to which I have referred this afternoon. The appointment of these people testifies to the fact that the federal Government's commitment to reducing regional disparities is stronger than ever.

I would like to continue to use the Province of New Brunswick as an example of one of the provinces in Atlantic Canada to which there is federal commitment to alleviate regional economic disparity. On April 13, 1984, the Minister of State for Economic and Regional Development on behalf of Canada and the Premier of New Brunswick on behalf of the province signed a new federal-provincial economic and regional development agreement commonly referred to as ERDA. This new agreement replaces the expired 10-year general development agreement that had seen the delivery of more than \$450 million of federal money to fund a broad range of essential infrastructure projects. These projects provide a framework within which measures for economic development in New Brunswick may be taken through consultation and co-operation. Within this 10-year framework for joint planning and co-ordinated delivery, federal and provincial Governments are working together to develop concrete initiatives, including subsidiary agreements that provide for specific activities and a memorandum of understanding that provides a basis for the development of such activities.

In the last 10 years, both levels of Government have committed well over \$500 million to the economic development of New Brunswick. We have made a commitment to maintain spending at the same level as under the previous GDA agreement. Previously, specific projects were realized through subsidiary agreements either on a sector-by-sector basis dealing with agriculture, forestry, minerals or fuels, or on a regional basis as was the case for the northeast and Kent regional subsidiary agreements. These GDA subsidiary agreements provide assistance for educational, industrial, municipal and transportation infrastructures along with specific priority initiatives.

I may say, Mr. Speaker, that while we have done a hell of a lot through the previous GDA agreement and through the original DREE Department, much remains to be done. There are other specific areas in the region which must be targeted for development. That is certainly true of many parts of New Brunswick and particularly true of the northern portion of the province.

While we have spent millions of dollars assisting the province with respect to infrastructure such as municipal services, we are hearing all too often now that the provincial Government finds itself in dire straits. It has found itself strapped financially for one reason or another. I will not deal with the details of the causes within the administration of that Government for being in such a bad financial position.

Since the Government is crying that it is too strapped financially to pay for some of these projects from its own budget, it seems to me that while these negotiations are going on, Ministers in the provincial Government, such as the Minis-