

*Regional Development*

Agreements that have been signed with the various provinces across this country. The peak, and I quote here from page 68 of the Budget papers—it says it was tabled in the House of Commons on April 27, and we all know that is not quite true—indicates:

On a year-to-year basis, following a projected peaking of expenditures at close to \$1.4 billion in 1989-90, annual funding provisions will be stabilized—

Stabilized is a nice word, is it not, Mr. Speaker? Unfortunately it is an inaccurate word in this case, because we read:

—annual funding provisions will be stabilized at somewhat over \$1 billion a year.

In fact, in any kind of real language, as opposed to the newspeak that this Government puts into place in its attempts to sell the Budget, that is a reduction. That is a major reduction, a reduction of close to 30 per cent from 1989-90 to the following year and the years that will follow from that at which the expenditure pattern will be a billion dollars.

The Minister has come back and suggested to us that in fact if you compare the five years previous with the five years in the future there is a great increase. But if you look at the comparison and the sections of the Budget provisions which the Minister is using for purposes of his comparisons, he has taken out of the calculation the major program, the Industrial and Regional Development Program, IRDP, which this committee talked about in the past and which has represented the major mechanism by which funds for regional development purposes went to the provinces in the past. If you take that out and not even consider it you are going to look good over the next five years compared to the past five years. But the program itself is dead. The Government permitted it to die despite the tremendous benefits IRDP gave to communities across this country and despite the tremendous work this Conservative-dominated committee went through to try to improve IRDP for the future. Despite all of that, the Government let this important regional development program die.

The consequence, if you start to look at the Estimates for this coming year, is that contributions under IRDP, which will continue because some of the policies of the actual agreements made were multi-year agreements, will decline from \$106 million in 1988-89 to just \$68 million in 1989-90. At the same time, contributions made by the Regional Industrial Expansion Ministry to the various subagreements that are part of the economic and

regional development agreements with the provinces will also decline by \$10 million between last year and this year.

That is why a motion such as the one I moved is so absolutely crucial. It has to be put to this Government that all of us who come from the non-metropolitan parts of this country, from parts that are far away from the Torontos, the Montreals, the Vancouvers, the Winnipegs—

**Mr. Halliday:** From Windsor.

**Mr. Langdon:** Windsor is not a metropolitan part any more than Stratford is, as the Hon. Member knows. These parts of Canada demand a fair deal from this Government. They do not demand a special deal or special privileges. They quite rightly demand that they get fairness, equity, and a chance for their children and their communities to be able to have economic opportunities just as people do in downtown Toronto, those in the richer parts of Montreal, and in the more affluent parts of Vancouver.

We have to make a commitment. We have to get a message across to the Government through a motion such as this one, which says that the Government should consider the advisability of increasing spending for regional development. It should see to it that this increased spending is focused where it is needed, that it is planned so that what takes place is done in the most efficient, effective way possible, which does not waste money, which helps people and is done in a way that builds for the future.

• (1720)

We will not then be looking for simple, short term make-work kinds of band-aid solutions which have characterized our regional development efforts put in place both by Liberals and Conservatives in the past.

What must be put in place are serious regional development efforts, a commitment to regional development efforts. I hope that everybody who comes from parts of Canada that experience this inequality or unfairness which now exists will rise and participate in this debate to see to it that fairness is established as a principle for the future of our country.

[*Translation*]

**Mr. Guy St-Julien (Abitibi):** Madam Speaker, I welcome this opportunity to speak to the House about the federal Government's innovative approach to regional development in Quebec.