

Oral Questions

Mr. Speaker, I would urge the NCC to continue to be generous and let the *Maison d'amitié* operate in my riding and carry out its worthy and meritorious work. Like a number of other Government agencies, the NCC should appreciate the fact that one preaches by example, and that the Government must give consideration and assistance to the *Maison d'amitié*.

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REGIONAL ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT

INQUIRY ABOUT WHO MAKES DECISIONS

Mr. Raymond Garneau (Laval-des-Rapides): Mr. Speaker, yesterday, I mentioned the extremely serious situation in the town of Murdochville, following lay-offs of a number of workers.

This Government seems to be completely ignoring the priorities of regional development. Several billion dollars have been cut from various programs. The Department of Regional Industrial Expansion operations are being investigated, some of the decisions are being made in the Prime Minister's office, and others in the Deputy Prime Minister's office, so that people in the Gaspé are wondering who is making the decisions for regional development in the Gaspé. We have a development project in Matane for a paper mill. Decisions are still pending. Four hundred people lost their jobs in Murdochville, and no decisions have been made. Meanwhile, another Minister is visiting the Gaspé to prepare phase two of the eastern development plan. In 1983, there was a plan with a budget of over \$250 million, but today, the Minister of Supply and Services (Mrs. Vézina) has been unable to convince her colleague at National Defence of the importance of regional development in allocating that department's budget, at a time when it is engaged in consultations for phase two.

I want to ask this Government: Who is making the decisions for regional development?

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[English]

ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRSACID RAIN—ENVOYS' REPORT—RECOMMENDATION
CONCERNING FURTHER RESEARCH

Hon. Chas. L. Caccia (Davenport): Mr. Speaker, as time goes by it becomes more evident that it was a mistake on the part of the Government to accept the recommendations of the Envoys' Report on acid rain.

As a member of the Acid Rain Committee, and on the eve of our visit to Washington to meet with U.S. parliamentarians there, I must conclude that Canadians would be in a stronger position had the Prime Minister (Mr. Mulroney) rejected the

envoys' recommendation of having five more years of research and demonstration.

At this rate of progress, in 1991 Canada will still be waiting for the outcome of U.S. research activities while Canadian officials and their successors will be engaged in smoke and mirror negotiations with their U.S. counterparts.

The Prime Minister did not say to President Reagan, right from the start, that we want the U.S. to cut the massive acid gas pollution which daily crosses the border into Canada. Against this background, while acid rain corrodes human health, water, soil, and forests, the Government looks inept, impotent and ineffective. What a sham!

ORAL QUESTION PERIOD

[English]

REGIONAL INDUSTRIAL EXPANSIONSPENDING ON NATIONAL DEFENCE—VIEWS OF MINISTER OF
SUPPLY AND SERVICES

Mr. Brian Tobin (Humber—Port au Port—St. Barbe): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister responsible for regional industrial expansion, whoever that is.

Less than a week after the Prime Minister announced the new Atlantic Opportunities Program in St. John's, Newfoundland, and proclaimed that all is right in the world of regional economic development, we now have the Minister of Supply and Services declaring that half of the country is crying and that the Minister of National Defence, who proposes a \$183 billion defence budget, is too young to understand. The Minister's problems have less to do with his youth and everything to do with his tired old Tory philosophy. I ask the Minister of Regional Industrial Expansion whether he shares the views of the Minister of Supply and Services who believes that the Defence Department should be prepared to pay a premium on its contracts to encourage economic development in areas of high unemployment?

[Translation]

Hon. Michel Côté (Minister of Regional Industrial Expansion): Mr. Speaker, obviously this Party has no idea what regional development is all about. Since 1984, we have been stressing the need to ensure that regional development is done with far greater awareness of, and sensitivity to, the problems of the regions. Mr. Speaker, that is why last week we announced the creation of the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency. The agency will have a budget of over one billion dollars and thus create many jobs. In fact, this is the kind of initiative that not only the Premiers but the entire population of Atlantic Canada have been waiting for.