

S. O. 31

Development Corporation has, through the policy decision, chosen to be socially responsible to the people of Cape Breton Island.

That was the essence of the corporation and that was in essence the work of the Industrial Development Division. The former chairman of the board of the Cape Breton Development Corporation, Dr. Theresa Mac-Neil, said in part:

The social conscience of the Cape Breton Development Corporation has long been possible by the work it assigned to the Industrial Development Division. It is possible through program retention to duplicate the current activities of the Industrial Development Division. That is not a problem. However, in doing so, the essence of the Cape Breton Development Corporation is being lost.

I share that with members of the House because historically we had the Cape Breton Development Corporation which was to do a number of things, as I have indicated, and the government comes along in October of 1986 and creates the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency. That is in part I of the bill. In part II of the bill it did away with the Industrial Development Division and created what we now have, Enterprise Cape Breton Corporation, which the government now wishes to do away with.

In the Speech from the Throne on October 1, 1986 the Conservative government announced its intention to establish the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency in order to "facilitate and co-ordinate all federal development initiatives in that area".

That was October 1, 1986. This announcement was made by the Prime Minister on June 6, 1987 in Saint John with unbelievable fanfare. There was a huge press conference, a big news release, and a big reception. So vital was this new program that a mere six months later, a mere 14 months after the original announcement in the Speech from the Throne, the implementing legislation was finally introduced in the House of Commons in December of 1987.

The government's hypocrisy is rather breathtaking. It tells Atlantic Canadians that they are the real decision makers behind ACOA, which we know is not correct, and then warns them that they will be held culpable if ACOA fails.

The Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency was given a budget of \$1.05 billion. All the wonderful press people

and the writers in *The Globe and Mail* and *The Toronto Star* and *The Montreal Gazette* and *The Vancouver Sun* used to say my goodness, what an unbelievable amount of money for Atlantic Canada.

I know my time is coming to an end, but I just want to close with this and then I can continue the debate afterwards.

That was \$1.05 billion over five years, roughly \$200 million a year for four individual provinces. It amounted roughly to \$86.96 per person. That is what the announcement then made with regard to ACOA.

• (1100)

I see my time is up, but I hope to continue the debate after Routine Proceedings.

[Translation]

Madam Deputy Speaker: It being 11 o'clock, the House will now proceed to statements pursuant to Standing Order 31.

STATEMENTS PURSUANT TO S.O. 31

[Translation]

FRENCH IN THE ARMED FORCES

Mr. Guy Saint-Julien (Abitibi): Madam Speaker, today *La Presse* reported the following, and I quote:

Minister of Defence Marcel Masse has decided to take concrete steps to ensure that francophones are able to work and advance within the armed forces in their own mother tongue.

"The Chief of Staff and the Minister of Defence have decided it is imperative that all courses (basic occupational) shall be offered in French starting September 1993", the minister announced when he appeared yesterday before parliament's official languages committee.

In doing so, Mr. Masse wants to remedy a major deficiency in the department and the Armed Forces which was pointed out by a departmental official languages committee.

According to a report published on November 15 this year, 41 per cent of the basic courses for various occupations are still not available in French. Basic technical training for officers is given in French in only 10 per cent of the cases.

"This is a situation we cannot tolerate, and changes must be made as soon as possible", said Mr. Masse. He added that in five years' time, all basic technical training courses should be available in both languages, for all branches of the service and all occupations.