

Program to ensure that the economic opportunities of aboriginal people will be addressed by the Government, as it has said it would so often in the last few weeks.

• (1640)

The Government's new program must be one which gives hope to the young people and to their home communities in order to ensure that those young people who are going into further education may participate fully in Canadian life. We have become so aware of native post-secondary education in the last few weeks through rallies to ensure that the Government does not put a cap on funding of post-secondary education for Indian people. We must ensure that the young people of the North have the opportunity to be involved in the economic mosaic of Canada. That will require more money rather than a simple consolidation of the program.

Mr. Tremblay (Rosemont): Madam Speaker, I wish to reassure the Hon. Member for Nunatsiak (Mr. Anawak) that as was mentioned in the Speech from the Throne, it is the intention of the Government to extend the native economic program. Proposals for a future program will be based on the results of the consultative process which is now under consideration. This process of consultation was formally conducted between July, 1987 and March, 1988 with interested native people from all parts of Canada. This was the most extensive public consultative process ever conducted by the Department and it was directed by the task force review group.

The program has been extended to July, 1989, and I can assure the Hon. Member that the intention in the Speech from the Throne will be respected by the Government. This will be in consultation with native people.

Mr. Anawak: Madam Speaker, if the consultation the Hon. Member is talking about is the same kind of consultation the Government said it did regarding post-secondary education funding, then I do not think that that consultation will be effective. In fact, it may even be non-existent.

The Native Economic Development Program has been extended until the end of July, 1989. However, it has been extended only with the existing funds. It is not an

extension with more money added to the program of \$345 million.

There was consultation regarding the Native Economic Development Program of which I was a part some years ago. I hope it really does address the needs across Canada. However, I reiterate that most consultations seem to end up on the bookshelves collecting dust, and I hope that the Hon. Member will relay that to the Government. The Government has consistently said that it is all for native people and all for the poorer regions. I hope it will heed that consultative process if indeed it does happen.

Mr. MacLellan: Madam Speaker, I would like to address a question to my colleague who has just spoken very eloquently and very informatively about the problems facing those in the northern part of Canada today. I sympathize with the points he has made and I can identify, being a Member of Parliament from Atlantic Canada, with his concerns about what exactly the Government will be doing.

In Atlantic Canada, we have seen funding for the Atlantic Canada Opportunities Agency whittled away. We have now been told that funding for the ERDA agreements will be reduced and the Hon. Member is now saying that his area does not even have an agreement. All it has is an extension to the end of July of the agreement which has elapsed with no additional funding. He is hearing the same platitudes about the Government's concern for northern Canada while in fact there is an erosion in funding for northern Canada rather than an increase in funding.

Not only is there a complete disregard for the Native Economic Development Program but there is also a whittling away of the economic base of the Department of Indian Affairs and Northern Development. I would ask the Hon. Member to elaborate on just what this reduction in funding will impact on. Perhaps he could tell us the urgency of the situation as he sees it.

Mr. Anawak: Madam Speaker, I thank the Hon. Member for the question. In many cases, the North is seen as being a desolate land, but we like to think that it is quite different. It is a beautiful land and that is why it is called Nunatsiak which means beautiful land in Inuktitut. The people up North are very determined to be part of the Canadian mosaic in economic and social develop-