

the erroneous impression that it was \$1 for the property which was part of No. 26 colliery. It was \$250,000. Also, there is a lien on the equipment of this company for \$1 million held by ECB. While this project is in trouble, I want my colleagues to know that I did take responsibility. I did cut off the funding. I ordered my officials to do this.

I am a little surprised that the member opposite seems to take such obvious delight in attributing a lot of horror stories to an economic development agency that has done so much for an area in Canada that needed it so badly.

**Mr. Chris Axworthy (Saskatoon—Clark's Crossing):** Mr. Speaker, it is not a question of taking delight in horror stories. It is a question of making sure that public funds are well spent. In this case they have not been well spent. There are any number of occasions in which they have not been well spent in Cape Breton and elsewhere.

My supplementary question is directed to the Prime Minister and it is about ministerial responsibility. The minister said, and I quote from the committee proceedings: "If there has been a mistake made, I will take full responsibility." There clearly have been mistakes made, the minister has admitted that there have been mistakes made. Does ministerial responsibility not mean anything any more? Is it not time the Prime Minister removed this minister?

**Hon. Elmer M. MacKay (Minister of Public Works):** Mr. Speaker, if my colleague equates taking responsibility with doing the right thing and doing what his colleagues advocated as being cause to resign, that indeed is a new concept of ministerial responsibility.

Again, I repeat that ACOA has, with the understanding of colleagues from his party and from the Liberal Party, made modifications to some of the rules that govern economic development. It should be noted by the House that well over \$1 billion has gone into Cape Breton, through various programs of assistance, all well deserved.

What we are trying to do is find out how we can get a better return for our investment and do a better job of regional development planning. This is why we have recently obtained the services of Mr. Tony Brait, a respected Newfoundland businessman, to do a comprehensive assessment of what we have been doing right and

what we have been doing wrong in Cape Breton. I hope we will have the support of all colleagues opposite in this regard.

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[Translation]

#### PARLIAMENT HILL

**Mr. Guy Saint-Julien (Abitibi):** Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of Public Works.

Last week, *Le Droit* reported that your department planned to build a parking and shopping centre under Parliament Hill, and that this project would cost \$68 million.

Would the minister agree this project is useless, since all members have outside parking space like any factory worker in Canada and we have more important priorities on our minds?

[English]

**Hon. Elmer M. MacKay (Minister of Public Works):** Mr. Speaker, I will tell the House that this is a discussion paper that was circulated widely by some people who apparently are seized with an edifice complex.

**Some hon. members:** Oh, oh.

**Mr. MacKay:** While there may be need for increased parking and other facilities, I am not particularly impressed with this concept. I want to assure my colleague that no moneys have been appropriated, no decisions have been taken and I, for one, am not too impressed with this concept.

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#### TRADE

**Hon. Roy MacLaren (Etobicoke North):** Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister for International Trade. The government recently announced that Canada will participate with Mexico and the United States in discussions intended to lead to the negotiation of a North American free trade agreement.

Will the minister confirm the statement of the United States trade representative that the three countries have agreed to the end of January, three months from now, as the deadline for determining whether Canada will be at the table?