

Oral Questions

My department and this government are there to help them. I would point out to him that the people in his riding, in my riding, and in our city are one heck of a lot better off today than they were in 1983.

* * *

[Translation]

SHIPYARDS

Mr. Alfonso Gagliano (Saint-Léonard): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of Industry, Science and Technology. Quebec shipyard workers heard yesterday that in addition to the Conservative government's new tax on goods and services, they are going to lose their jobs, because according to our information and what was said yesterday in the Quebec National Assembly, in 1992 there will be no more shipyards in Quebec.

Will the Minister respond to an appeal by Quebecers to guarantee the future of our shipyards, and will he from now on award a substantial number of contracts to Quebec?

[English]

Hon. Harvie Andre (Minister of Regional Industrial Expansion and Minister of State for Science and Technology): Mr. Speaker, the federal government is well aware of the situation at MIL. Indeed, I have met with Minister Tremblay, the Minister of Industry and Commerce, as well as Robert Tessier, the president of MIL.

MIL has work in its yards until 1992. There is an overcapacity of shipbuilding in Canada against the kinds of order that we see coming down. We have a policy in place that the Government of Canada will co-operate with any industrial led efforts at consolidation. We have closed yards in Ontario and Quebec under that policy.

We are ready to co-operate with the Government of Quebec which is the owner of this yard in terms of meeting the challenges that lie ahead.

[Translation]

Mr. Gagliano: Mr. Speaker, will the minister give Quebecers the assurance today that after 1992, there will still be shipyards in Quebec so that these workers can at least cherish that hope during the Christmas holidays?

[English]

Mr. Andre: Mr. Speaker, certainly I can assure the hon. member, as I assured Minister Tremblay and assured Mr. Tessier, that the Government of Canada is ready to co-operate with the owners of MIL, the Government of Quebec and the management of the yard to manage this situation.

There is nothing that I can do immediately or within a short-term agenda to change the situation. There is an overcapacity of shipbuilding capability in this country, but we were certainly committed to working with the Government of Quebec to ensure the workers and of MIL have their interests attended to.

* * *

THE ENVIRONMENT

Mr. Stan Wilbee (Delta): Mr. Speaker, in the absence of the Minister of the Environment, my question is for his parliamentary secretary.

It has come to my attention that there had been another oil spill on the west coast south of Vancouver near Cherry Point. This oil is moving up toward Boundary Bay which is in my riding. It is home to 100,000 migratory birds at this time of year, as well as extensive shell fishing and herring fishing in that area.

How is this being monitored? What is it that the Canadian government is doing to protect the wildlife in Canadian waters if it does indeed enter into the Canadian waters?

Mr. Lee Clark (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of the Environment): Mr. Speaker, yesterday afternoon two or perhaps at some times three oil slicks of essentially a relatively small size were detected near Cherry Point and Birch Point.

As a result both Canadian Coast Guard and American Coast Guard officials went into operation to monitor the source of the slicks and to follow their passage.

The joint Canadian-American action plan was put in place as a result of a request from Environment Canada. Canadian Wildlife Services helicopters monitored the slick's shift in the afternoon and this morning.

I was advised as of an hour and a half ago and as a result of recent overflights that the oil slicks are no