

*Oral Questions*

## COUNCIL'S REQUEST FOR ADDITIONAL FUNDING

**Ms. Pauline Jewett (New Westminster-Coquitlam):** Mr. Speaker, since the Minister has both of those figures wrong, will he realize that the request of the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council is for at least an additional \$5.8 million for this fiscal year? Is he going to support that request in the social development committee and Cabinet?

**Hon. Francis Fox (Minister of Communications):** Mr. Speaker, I think the Hon. Member should have a look at the balance sheet. There was a program established three years ago, which was temporary in nature, to give an amount of funds to researchers in Canada to do studies on matters which we consider to be national objectives and which the SSHRC and the community in general agreed were of importance to the country. That program came to an end. That was not an amount which was in the base budget of the SSHRC. If the Hon. Member wants to go through the figures she should have a look at what is the base budgeting of the SSHRC. The Hon. Member will see that the SSHRC has not only received increases for inflation, but has received an increase of \$2 million in the base of the SSHRC. We have gone on to say that the SSHRC is in the process of providing us with a five-year plan. Obviously, if that five-year plan makes sense, and having seen it I know it makes sense, I would hope that we would be in a position to obtain more funding for the important area which is represented by the SSHRC.

**Ms. Jewett:** Mr. Speaker, the Minister is quibbling. I was talking about the total budget rather than the base budget. That is what I was talking about, and that is what he keeps avoiding. He is therefore undermining the Social Sciences and Humanities Research Council.

\* \* \*

## MUSEUMS AND ART GALLERIES

## CANADA MUSEUMS CONSTRUCTION CORPORATION—PRIVATE FUNDING CAMPAIGN

**Ms. Pauline Jewett (New Westminster-Coquitlam):** Mr. Speaker, since I am discussing matters of a funding nature with the Minister, who is also responsible for the Canada Museums Construction Corporation, will he explain to the House why he has authorized that Corporation to raise \$24 million in private funding when all three Parties in the House agreed only the other day that the new Peace Research Institute should not seek out private funding but should be supported by government funding? Why is he allowing the Museums Construction Corporation to seek \$24 million in private funding, which is robbing all the smaller museums in Canada of money from the private sector?

**Hon. Francis Fox (Minister of Communications):** Mr. Speaker, we have indicated a very strong and clear commitment by the Government to the arts in Canada. We have made sufficient funds available to the Museums Construction Corporation to build two museums in the national capital area. The

National Museum of Man is to be built on the Hull side, and the National Gallery is to be built in Ottawa.

The amount of \$190 million has been allocated. While that amount is sufficient to build those museums, if we want those museums to have an outward appearance that Canadians from coast to coast would be proud of, we feel it would be interesting to obtain additional funds from the private sector. This would allow Canadians from coast to coast to participate in the building of each museum and to feel that it is not only a museum given to them by public funds, but also a museum which they have participated in building themselves.

**Ms. Jewett:** Inconsistent.

\* \* \*

## FARM CREDIT CORPORATION

## INTEREST RATE CHARGES—REFERENCE TO PROJECTED INCREASE

**Mr. Lee Clark (Brandon-Souris):** Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Finance. Both *The Globe and Mail* and *The Western Producer* have quoted Farm Credit Corporation officials as saying that their lending rate will likely increase by 1 per cent in mid June, even though their lending rate is already at the unacceptable level of 14 per cent to 15 per cent.

In light of the near record number of farm bankruptcies which have already occurred, and in view of the fact that the Bank of Canada rate has declined slightly in the past two weeks, will the Minister reassure Canadian farmers that there will be no increase in the Farm Credit Corporation's lending rate in June? In fact, will he reassure Canadian farmers that there will be no further increase throughout the balance of this calendar year?

[*Translation*]

**Hon. Marc Lalonde (Minister of Finance):** Mr. Speaker, the Hon. Member should not necessarily expect the situation to grow worse, and everything he has heard is nothing more than speculative guesses which are now being conveyed by certain media. He knows that the lending rates of the FCC are geared to the interest rates it has to pay to borrow. If, as the Hon. Member indicates, the interest rates—particularly those of the Bank of Canada—seem to be declining, he ought to be encouraged by this trend and assume that interest rates will remain stable. However, I will do as he does and wait to see how interest rates will perform, and he will have to see what happens before year's end.

[*English*]

**Mr. Clark (Brandon-Souris):** Mr. Speaker, I wish the Minister had gone one step further and made the promise I sought. If he had done that, he would have given Canadian farmers the reassurance they need at this point in time.