

today—I want to know from the Solicitor General whether he or his predecessors have inquired as to what happened to those particular documents. What study has he done to determine whether any solicitor general has had any responsibility for seeing that those possibly inculpatory documents are now missing and are not available to the McDonald inquiry?

Mr. Blais: The hon. gentleman is not being fair in making suppositions in questions of that nature. I can guarantee to the hon. gentleman that neither myself nor my predecessor nor, indeed, any solicitor general has had anything to do with mislaying of any document or documents.

Mr. Stanfield: How do you know?

Mr. Blais: I will say, further, that indeed the documents themselves could have been destroyed because the three years during which they were being retained, according to the internal procedures of the RCMP, had expired and in accordance with the usual methods and measures the documents could have been destroyed. The fact is that the hon. gentleman recognizes very well that if he were to keep files eternally in any internal administration, the cost of storing them would be prohibitive indeed.

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[Translation]

NATIONAL DEFENCE

INQUIRY WHETHER SHIP CONSTRUCTION CONTRACTS AWARDED TO LAUZON SHIPYARDS

Mr. Adrien Lambert (Bellechasse): Mr. Speaker, I wish to direct a question to the Minister of National Defence.

Not long ago I asked the minister in the House whether his department has finalized ship construction plans and the minister replied that he would soon have good news for us about this.

In view of the fact that unemployment is rising in Lévis and along the south shore, could the minister indicate to the House whether his department has reached a decision and whether contracts will be awarded to the Lauzon shipyards to ease the unemployment situation?

● (1432)

[English]

Hon. Barney Danson (Minister of National Defence): Yes, Mr. Speaker, I have been pursuing this with the hon. member for Lévis as well. The hon. member raised a question in the House before, with the hon. member for Lévis, and also with my colleague the Minister of Transport in an attempt to speed up work so that those shipyards can be busy and the people well employed. The Minister of Transport may wish to add to this answer today or in the very near future.

Oral Questions

[Translation]

TRANSPORT

REQUEST FOR REPORT ON SHIPBUILDING IN LAUZON, QUEBEC

Mr. Adrien Lambert (Bellechasse): I have a supplementary question, Mr. Speaker.

Since the Minister of National Defence is referring me to the Minister of Transport, has the latter good news to communicate to the House on this subject and could he confirm the date on which the work might start on the job he wants the Lauzon shipyards to do for him?

[English]

Hon. Otto E. Lang (Minister of Transport): Yes, Mr. Speaker, some arrangements are in the final process of being made and the work involved would follow immediately.

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ENVIRONMENTAL AFFAIRS

LAKE ONTARIO—DAMAGE TO SHORE PROPERTIES DUE TO HIGH WATER LEVELS

Hon. George Hees (Prince Edward-Hastings): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of State for the Environment. I gave him notice of this question yesterday. It deals with a matter which I have discussed with him and his department over several weeks.

As water flowing into Lake Ontario at a rate in excess of 400,000 cubic feet per minute and flowing out at a rate of only 300,000 cubic feet per minute has caused the level of the lake to rise one foot above the average level for this time of year, which is continuing to rise rapidly and has already caused extensive damage to properties on the shores of the lake, would the minister advise the House what steps he and his department are taking first of all to stop the water from rising and then to bring the level of the lake back to normal?

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Hees: We used to do it when the Conservatives were in power.

An hon. Member: How long ago was that?

Hon. Len Marchand (Minister of State (Environment)): We are getting into pretty deep water, Mr. Speaker.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Marchand: The present level of Lake Ontario is 246 feet which, despite the spring rise, is still within the International Joint Commission orders of approval. The St. Lawrence board of control is continuing to discharge the maximum possible under existing conditions. The present rate of discharge is 308,000 cubic feet, which is just a little more than what the hon. member said.