

Oral Questions

[Translation]

Hon. Marc Lalonde (Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources): Madam Speaker, I have already had some talks with members of Petro-Canada in that connection. The corporation responsible for renewable energy will first be set up as a branch of Petro-Canada, which has indicated to me that it was considering a capitalization of some \$20 million for that new corporation. As for its priorities, I would hesitate to give details as long as the members of the new board of directors and its chief executive have not been appointed. I merely wish to indicate that the main purpose of the corporation will be to promote all kinds of new energy, especially renewable energy.

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[English]

FISHERIES**IMPROVEMENT OF HARBOURS IN ATLANTIC CANADA**

Mr. Fred McCain (Carleton-Charlotte): Madam Speaker, I should like to ask the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans whether or not the government intends to honour the commitment of the former government to increase the small craft harbour allocation by \$14 million so that the much-needed program to improve fishing harbours in Atlantic Canada can commence immediately.

Hon. Roméo LeBlanc (Minister of Fisheries and Oceans): I suspect that what the Secretary of State has been saying with reference to certain cultural program announcements is quite applicable to this question. When we inherited the economic envelope we found that the commitments were great but that the reserves were small, if existent.

Obviously, we intend to try to restore the integrity of this program which, by the way, was frozen by the previous president of the treasury board: the building season last year was quite negatively affected. This year, the budget was at the \$26 million level, which would have made it the lowest level for a number of years.

Mr. McCain: Madam Speaker, it is easy to muddle up the statistics to the benefit of the individual speaking at a given moment and, perhaps, even to mix the envelopes. But since the minister has answered as he has, let me ask this question: Does he consider that the figure of \$26 million, which appears now to be allocated, is adequate for the job which has to be done in his constituency and in other Atlantic constituencies?

Mr. LeBlanc: If the expenditure program which was prepared by the previous government, obviously under the benevolent eye of the former president of the treasury board, had been given adequate funds, I would be able to respond to the hon. member. But we will try to get more money into this program.

SMALL CRAFT AND HARBOURS—DISTRIBUTION OF DREE GRANTS

Hon. John C. Crosbie (St. John's West): A supplementary to the Minister of Fisheries. The estimates tabled in this House total \$58.4 billion, which included \$50 million in a special employment fund for eastern Canada, programs aimed at stimulating employment and economic development there, of which the previous government had allocated \$14 million to small craft and harbours and \$25 million to fisheries.

Why does the Minister of Fisheries not get on the ball and secure that money which is already in the estimates, the \$58.4 billion tabled in this House, and get it for his department and carry out the promises made, the commitments made, for small craft and harbours?

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Hon. Roméo LeBlanc (Minister of Fisheries and Oceans): The budget which was established for the small craft harbours program in the estimates which were prepared by the previous government and tabled in the House indicate a level of \$26.5 million for small craft harbours. I will endeavour to obtain from my colleague the moneys which were referred to in the election campaign by the hon. member, but which to my knowledge were not provided.

Mr. Crosbie: A supplementary to the minister for the employment of Liberals and immigration.

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Madam Speaker: Order, please. The hon. member should refer to the minister by his proper title.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Crosbie: Thank you, Madam Speaker. One gets mixed up when one sees what is going on. In the minister's department this year, within the estimate of \$58.4 billion which was tabled there were \$50 million of additional moneys to stimulate employment in eastern Canada. Some of that money has apparently been diverted by the minister responsible for DREE for railway track removal in Winnipeg.

Will that hon. gentleman provide the \$25 million for fisheries that is the amount there, and \$14 million for small craft and harbours, and not take it for the defenestration of railway tracks in Winnipeg, and put it to its proper use?

Hon. Lloyd Axworthy (Minister of Employment and Immigration): It is unfortunate that at the meeting held last Sunday in Winnipeg among the representatives of the three levels of government there was not a representative of the Conservative party there from the federal caucus. He would not, then, be repeating the kind of misinformation which was issued by his leader yesterday on the question of rail relocation.

I suggest to him that, when it comes to employment, we shall be announcing an employment program which will provide full satisfaction for concerns in the maritime area. I say to