

ago with regard to fusion research in this country. At that time he expressed reservations about the research and development program for fusion in Canada. In the interim I would have hoped that the minister would have had an opportunity to view some of the advantages which there might be for Canada in the areas of metals, fuels, fuel handling and in laser development for industry and medicine. In the meantime what we have had is a continuing program, with \$2.1 million dedicated to fusion research. That is only enough to stall the programs in the situation they are in now—

Madam Speaker: Order, please. Science and technology seems to be a marvellous pretext for long preambles to questions. Could the hon. member come to his question?

Mr. Gurbin: Madam Speaker, is the parliamentary secretary able to give this House an indication whether or not the government is prepared to support a research and development fusion program which will allow Canada to maintain its presence in an international atmosphere?

Mr. Roger Simmons (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of State for Science and Technology and Minister of the Environment): Madam Speaker, first of all, I say with kindness to the hon. member that he has very badly misrepresented the position of the Minister of State for Science and Technology as he expressed it in the estimates committee some months ago. At no time did the minister suggest, either to the press or in committee, that he was against fusion research. What he did say is that there are a number of questions which need to be addressed. He said there are a number of cautions which need to be kept in mind.

I suggest to the hon. member that he avail himself of the opportunity later today to go to the special task force on alternate forms of energy, of which, I believe, he is a member, and put his views forward there. We will look forward to receiving them.

Madam Speaker: A short supplementary from the hon. member for Bruce-Grey.

Mr. Gurbin: Madam Speaker, that will be difficult. The continued amount which is dedicated to that fusion research program is \$2.1 million. That is the testimony we have from the minister. I ask this question in view of the International Atomic Energy Agency's representation that Canada is not spending enough, in view of what the minister of energy has said, that he is prepared to see the advantages for Canada, and because Edward Kitner, the head of the program in the United States, is prepared to write Canada into the program. Will the minister through the Ministry of State for Science and Technology dedicate the \$2.4 million extra which is required to open the window for Canada into the technology of the world?

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Simmons: Madam Speaker, we have heard the member's representation and we will certainly take it under advisement.

Oral Questions

IMMIGRATION

PROCESSING OF VICTIMS OF ITALIAN EARTHQUAKE

Mr. David Orlikow (Winnipeg North): Madam Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Employment and Immigration. I understand that representatives of the minister's department met recently with members of the Congress of Italo-Canadians with respect to the earthquake disaster in Italy. I understand that the members of that organization made certain proposals to representatives of the minister's department with respect to speeding up the movement of the victims of that earthquake to Canada. I wonder if the minister has had an opportunity to look at those proposals and does he have anything to report?

Hon. Lloyd Axworthy (Minister of Employment and Immigration): Madam Speaker, we have been concentrating primarily on the first wave of applications under the family class to make sure that those applicants could be brought to this country as quickly as possible. The latest report we have is that about 700 to 800 applications have been made at our embassy in Rome. We are processing those applications right now and the first of the victims of the earthquake are coming to Canada.

In the meantime we have had meetings with representatives of the different organizations in this country as well as keeping in touch with the Italian government to see what other kind of assistance we might be able to provide. My department is presently examining some of those proposals and alternatives. As soon as we discover how they might be applied effectively, we will be prepared to make an announcement to hon. members.

Mr. Orlikow: I understand that among the proposals discussed with representatives of the minister's department there was a proposal that as many of the earthquake victims as possible who could come to Canada as visitors at the present time be permitted to come. The proposal is that after they are here and after the situation has settled somewhat in Italy, those who would like to stay in Canada permanently be permitted to be processed here in Canada. In this way they would be given permission to stay in Canada permanently rather than having to return to Italy in order to apply. I wonder if the minister would give consideration to that proposal from the congress of Italo-Canadians.

Mr. Axworthy: Madam Speaker, I wish to make a slight correction. The proposal he speaks of was a proposal which came to us from the Liberal leader of Ontario, Mr. Stuart Smith. I believe it is a proposal which has a great deal of merit. It would provide the opportunity for those who are displaced or homeless in the earthquake area to come here and receive temporary residence rather than staying in a refugee camp. I told the Ontario Liberal leader that we would be prepared to consider that proposal and endeavour to see if we could also provide some opportunity for those who fall under that plan to work and go to school while they are here. Again, it is something which is presently under advisement and we