

*Adjournment Debate*

not to get involved and waste their money since there seems to be no commitment on the part of the National Harbours Board to fulfil this very necessary equipment requirement for the port of Vancouver. What a waste of time and entrepreneurial working capital, particularly as one tallies the accumulated waste that is the taxpayers' legacy from this government.

An example of waste and apparent patronage occurred in 1974 when the National Harbours Board purchased a U.S.-built vessel in New Orleans, the *Supply Venture*. Apparently, someone in Halifax purchased this boat in New Orleans for \$25,000, brought it to Halifax, then transferred the ownership to a company called Halifax Fishing Ventures Ltd. I have not been able to find that this company was ever registered, but it sold the vessel to the Department of Transport for \$75,000 on a seaworthiness certificate. The vessel was shipped to Vancouver as deck cargo where in 1975 it was appraised at \$10,000. It is nothing but a pile of junk. The engines have been removed but it has not been possible to get them to turn over. The boat lies in shame under a Vancouver bridge. This is an example of the patronage and waste of money involved in providing a needed boat for the port of Vancouver. The \$40,000 has obviously gone to somebody but not to the entrepreneurs who put forward legitimate bids for the equipment. It is a national shame to see patronage and waste like this when hardworking entrepreneurs and skilled labour are idle and cannot even be given a simple, direct order for a badly needed patrol vessel for the port of Vancouver.

I draw to your attention, Mr. Speaker, the fact that I have been waiting for answers to my order paper questions on this subject since November 28, 1977.

All that is offered is more stonewalling, more secrecy, more cover-up and abuse within the mandate of trust given to this government by the people of Canada. I take this opportunity to ask again when the Minister of Transport (Mr. Lang) will take the initiative and provide a Canadian built harbour patrol vessel for the port of Vancouver, the largest, busiest and most profitable harbour on the west coast of the continent of North America.

[Translation]

**Mr. Charles Lapointe (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Transport):** I agree with the hon. member on the importance of the port of Vancouver.

[English]

**An hon. Member:** We know, we live there!

[Translation]

**Mr. Lapointe:** If the hon. member would only listen, he might learn something. I agree with the hon. member on the importance of the port of Vancouver, a port which, as everyone knows, is open twelve months a year, which is of great importance for the economy of the Pacific coast and the whole of Canada.

This port has known a very extensive development over the past ten years, because of the increasing tonnage which is using

[Mr. Huntington.]

its facilities. Statistical reports indicate that over 40 million tons of goods have been handled in the port of Vancouver in 1976, which is more than any other Canadian port.

Of course, Mr. Speaker, in view of this fast increase of the tonnage handled in the port of Vancouver, it is understandable that—

● (2207)

[English]

**An hon. Member:** What is the question?

**Mr. Lapointe:** Wait until the end and you will hear the answer.

[Translation]

Mr. Speaker, it is quite understandable that a port of such importance wants to be provided with the necessary facilities to maintain its activities. At present, of the two patrolling vessels operating in the port of Vancouver, one has been in service for 17 years and the other for 33 years. Plans have been made to phase out the latter and replace it with a more recent boat which could better meet the more complex needs of the current facilities and the increased trade.

[English]

The Department of Supply and Services was therefore asked to obtain tenders for the supply of a suitable patrol vessel for the port of Vancouver and four tenders were received in response to the request. I understand, Mr. Speaker, that tenders have now been reviewed and that the contract will be awarded within the next few days.

**An hon. Member:** To whom?

**Mr. Lapointe:** I do not know, sir. It will be awarded within the next few days.

Along with the hon. member from the province of British Columbia we all look forward to the day in the not too distant future when the efficiency of the port of Vancouver will be increased by the addition of a new harbour patrol vessel.

THE CANADIAN ECONOMY—REASON FOR CONTINUING HIGH LEVEL OF INFLATION—DATE WHEN LEVEL WILL REACH FOUR PER CENT

**Mr. Sinclair Stevens (York-Simcoe):** Mr. Speaker, the matter which brings me into the adjournment debate tonight is an exchange I had with the Minister of Finance (Mr. Chrétien) on November 29, 1977, an exchange which was recorded in *Hansard* at pages 1349 and 1350. Very simply, I asked the minister why inflation in Canada over the three prior months had been running at an annualized rate of more than 8 per cent while our neighbour to the south, the United States, was cruising along with an inflation rate of only half that of ours. I further asked the minister why the government had silently abandoned its one time projected goal of 4 per cent inflation for this year, putting it off instead until some time after 1980.

None of the questions were meant to be taken lightly. With nearly a million Canadians out of work, with inflation again