

Oral Questions

Hon. Judy Erola (Minister of State (Mines)): I will be very happy to provide the hon. member with all of the facts of this contract the minute the tenders are made public. The confidentiality of the situation insists, of course, that this contract not be made public until it is signed. I will be very happy to provide him with the figures when they come. The fact is that hon. members opposite have been criticizing us for the lack of jobs in the automotive industry, and this particular contract will have a very direct effect on the automotive industry, as trucks will be part of the package.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

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SHIPBUILDING**SUPPORT FOR CANADIAN INDUSTRY**

Mr. Gus Mitges (Grey-Simcoe): Madam Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of State for Small Businesses and Tourism. In view of the fact that it is very important to maintain a strong domestic capability in the construction and repairing of ships in Canada and to maintain those 45,000 trucks off the ground and out into the marketplace. I am considering, besides the 9 per cent subsidy, to offset foreign government subsidies, particularly in the area of financing, which give offshore shipbuilders a considerable advantage in contract bidding over our own industry? As well, could the minister explain why, under the multimillion dollar federal Shipbuilding Industry Assistance Program, very little, if any, of these funds will indeed benefit our shipbuilding industry in the Great Lakes?

[Translation]

Hon. Charles Lapointe (Minister of State (Small Businesses and Tourism)): Madam Speaker, I wish to thank the hon. member for his question and for his continuing interest in the shipbuilding industry in Canada. I can inform the hon. member, and this has already been pointed out to him in the House, that eleven or twelve months ago, a comprehensive study of our shipbuilding assistance policy was initiated in consultation with the industry, the provincial governments and the unions involved in this sector. The study is just about finished, and the Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce is expecting to receive a report within a few days. Once the report has been read and considered by his cabinet colleagues, we shall then be able to either publish the report or announce a new policy in the coming months.

As for the millions of dollars, I can inform the hon. member that \$75 million are spent each year on subsidies to the shipbuilding industry at all shipyards throughout Canada, and the hon. member knows perfectly well that the shipyard in his riding has received—and why not—a generous share of this subsidy.

[English]

PREFERENTIAL TREATMENT FOR COMMONWEALTH COUNTRIES

Mr. Gus Mitges (Grey-Simcoe): Madam Speaker, I have a short supplementary question for the Minister of Transport. At the present time, as the minister knows, ships built by offshore countries which are plying their services completely in Canadian waters are subject to a 25 per cent duty. However, this duty does not apply to ships built in Commonwealth countries. Will the minister take a serious look at this provision in the act, and take the necessary steps to change the Canada Shipping Act and remove this preferential treatment which has proven to be a hardship to our own industry and has been an anachronism for many years?

Hon. Jean-Luc Pepin (Minister of Transport): Yes, Madam Speaker, such a step will be taken in the fall, in the legislation which we hope to introduce at that time. However, to put matters into context, hon. members should know that at the present time 50 per cent to 60 per cent of the coasting trade in Canadian waters is done by Canadian-built ships.

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CANADIAN BROADCASTING CORPORATION**REQUEST FOR IMPROVED RADIO SERVICE FOR NORTHERN NEW BRUNSWICK**

Mr. Maurice Harquail (Restigouche): Madam Speaker, my question is directed to the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Communications, and involves radio broadcasting by the Canadian Broadcasting Corporation, which has been a matter of concern for northern New Brunswickers for some time. We have had improvements in signal for television programs, but I wonder if the parliamentary secretary can indicate the present status and action which will be taken to bring daily radio broadcast service by the CBC to northern New Brunswick.

Mr. Jack Masters (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Communications): Madam Speaker, I know the hon. member's interest in this particular problem, as he has discussed it with the minister and myself on a number of occasions, and it has been a long-outstanding item. I can only say that it is the policy of the CBC to expand as quickly as possible. I can be encouraging in the sense that an announcement by the minister should be made in the very near future.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

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CROWN CORPORATIONS**SECRECY SURROUNDING SALARIES PAID TO SENIOR OFFICERS**

Hon. Walter Baker (Nepean-Carleton): Madam Speaker, my question is directed to the Acting Prime Minister, and it concerns the secrecy surrounding salaries paid to heads of