

million or more population. These are shocking figures. The causes are many, some structural, some cyclical, some political. It has been due in part to the free trade agreement, in part due to high taxes, in part due to political instability with the continual threat of separatist politics and the restrictive language laws.

A week or so ago a panel made up of Marcel Côté, Louise Roy and Pierre Pettigrew said that the alienation of the English population in Montreal carries a heavy burden for that city with lost head offices, lost job opportunities and lost investment. More than 200,000 individuals have left Montreal since the passage of Bill 101 a few years ago. The city is not in good shape.

Once again, I ask the federal government to get together with the Quebec government and the city government in Montreal to help the city come out of the sad situation that it is in. In particular, I ask the federal government to participate with the provinces and the municipalities in the municipal infrastructure program. All the provinces are ready to go ahead with it. The cities are ready to go ahead with it. All we need is the participation of the federal government. It would give a great shot in the arm to Montreal and other cities right across this country.

[Translation]

Mr. Jean-Marc Robitaille (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of State (Finance and Privatization)): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to speak on the hon. member's question.

This government announced a program of strategic investment in infrastructure that will stimulate economic growth and job creation in the short term and will actually increase Canada's potential economic growth in the longer term.

I remind the hon. member that last December 2 the Minister of Finance announced new investments in public infrastructure of more than \$2 billion over the next five years. These investments will directly create from 4,000 to 5,000 jobs a year.

In particular, this initiative provides up to \$125 million in new funding for the improvement of Champlain and Jacques Cartier bridges in Montreal. This is in addition to what the federal government has already committed for the work under way on Montreal's bridges.

Adjournment Debate

The investment program also includes funds for establishing partnerships to develop strategic transportation projects with the provinces.

The Minister of Transport is now working with the Government of Quebec to identify to which transportation projects the province gives priority. Good progress has been made in the discussions and construction work should begin this spring.

Although the infrastructure investment program applies to national transportation infrastructure, it will improve transportation systems and make it easier to travel in Montreal and several other urban centres across Canada. These investments will bring the city of Montreal important economic benefits.

• (1735)

[English]

TRADE

Ms. Lynn Hunter (Saanich—Gulf Islands): Mr. Speaker, my comments tonight flow from a question I put to the minister on March 30 with regard to water exports under NAFTA.

The government pleads that Canada's water policy prohibits the large-scale export of fresh water. But the federal water policy is a paper tiger that is not backed up by tough legislation. Legislation that would have expressly forbid the export of Canadian water died on the Order Paper in 1988 and it is not being revived.

The government also pleads that the implementing legislation for the FTA exempts large-scale water exports. But this legislation is now superseded by the free trade agreement as an international agreement and there is nothing in the free trade agreement that specifically excludes the export of water as it does raw logs and unprocessed fish.

Dr. Frank Quinn of the Federal Inland Waters Directorate admits that the Tory government is now reconsidering its position on water exports. At a recent water export conference Dr. Quinn noted: "There is every indication from comments made that this government is moving toward an export policy for water". The question remains whether the free trade agreement and the NAFTA endanger Canada's water.

Although the government argues there is nothing in either agreement which compels us to sell our water Canada's chief trade negotiator, Gordon Ritchie,