

Oral Questions

Should Know. Also, there is public information documentation as well as ongoing research. If it is helpful to the House, at the end of Question Period I can table information along these lines.

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EDUCATION

FUNDING OF POST-SECONDARY EDUCATION

Mr. Roland de Corneille (Eglinton-Lawrence): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Secretary of State who, on Monday, announced the federal Government's new educational policy which washes its hands of any responsibility for the amount or direction of funds going to post-secondary education. How will the Government now ensure Canada's economic and cultural future without taking at least some responsibility for adequate funding so that national objectives for post-secondary education can be met?

[Translation]

Hon. Benoît Bouchard (Secretary of State of Canada): Mr. Speaker, what I said this week was that the Federal Government transfers certain amounts to the provinces which, under our confederative system, are responsible for the allocation of these sums. I never said that I would refuse to co-operate with the provinces, and we are indeed co-operating with them, to try and find mechanisms which would allow the universities, colleges, and other institutions to receive the necessary support, naturally. When we transfer \$4.5 billion to the provinces, this is already a meaningful involvement, but when we then obtain guarantees from these provinces, whose jurisdiction we must respect, through mechanisms, discussions and support programs, it is quite obvious—

Mr. Speaker: I regret to inform the Minister that he is now making a speech. Supplementary.

[English]

ACCOUNTABILITY OF PROVINCES

Mr. Roland de Corneille (Eglinton-Lawrence): Mr. Speaker, in addition to cutting \$6 billion of anticipated transfer payments, is the Minister saying that his Conservative Government is going to abandon the amendment it passed when in opposition which requires that he see to it that the provinces are held accountable for how they financially support post-secondary education? Or has that now gone by the boards?

[Translation]

Hon. Benoît Bouchard (Secretary of State of Canada): Mr. Speaker, what this Government can promise is that we shall see to it that the amounts transferred under the agreements signed and accepted by your own Government in 1977, namely an unconditional transfer to the provinces, will be paid. The concept of these arrangements is that it is up to the provinces to decide. There have been no cutbacks, as we have repeated

many times; the amounts transferred to the provinces will increase. However, once more, we will have the necessary discussion to ensure that the various institutions will receive the money transferred to the provinces.

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[English]

ST. LAWRENCE SEAWAY

ANNOUNCED REOPENING OF WELLAND CANAL

Mr. Iain Angus (Thunder Bay-Atikokan): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of Transport and it concerns the Welland Canal. This morning his officials announced that the Seaway is going to be reopened on November 6. Have those officials determined the cause of the blow-out, and is this going to be a temporary repair of the Seaway wall?

Hon. Don Mazankowski (Minister of Transport): Mr. Speaker, my understanding is that the cause of the failure has not been precisely determined. I can give the Hon. Member no further information as of right now. I will be meeting with Mr. O'Neil, who is returning to Ottawa this afternoon, and he will be giving me a full briefing on the details of the repairs.

REPAIR WORK

Mr. Iain Angus (Thunder Bay-Atikokan): Mr. Speaker, it is my understanding from Seaway Authority officials that this is going to be a permanent repair. How can the Minister justify permanently repairing the facility when it is not known what caused the problem in the first place? How can we be assured that this repair job will hold, not only for this year but for years to come?

Hon. Don Mazankowski (Minister of Transport): Mr. Speaker, I will be in a better position to respond to that question perhaps tomorrow.

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AGRICULTURE

RED MEAT STABILIZATION PROGRAM INQUIRY

Mr. Maurice Foster (Algoma): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of Agriculture. Negotiations have been going on since July regarding a tripartite red meat stabilization program. There are reports that the producers and at least four provinces representing the vast majority of beef and hog production are ready to sign an agreement to be phased in over a three-year period. Can the Minister indicate if he is prepared to sign this agreement and when it will come into effect?

Hon. John Wise (Minister of Agriculture): Mr. Speaker, I certainly appreciate the Hon. Member's interest in a very important subject. The industry has attempted to make some progress on this program for at least 10 years. It might be of