

Privilege—Mr. Fox

Mr. Neil: Mr. Speaker, I direct my supplementary question to the Minister of Agriculture. In view of the fact the government elevator at Moose Jaw has a capacity of some five million bushels and presently has in storage 203,000 bushels, while the average over the year is 50,000, has the minister carried out any studies regarding the use of that elevator? In particular, has he discussed with the minister in charge of the Wheat Board the feasibility of using the drying facilities at the Moose Jaw terminal elevator to dry some of the grain that is damp in the northern part of the province, in order that there will be sales of such grain?

Hon. E. F. Whelan (Minister of Agriculture): Mr. Speaker, I am sure the hon. member is aware the Minister of Agriculture has visited the Moose Jaw elevator. From time to time expenditures have been made on that elevator to keep it modern and up to date in order that it can do the job it may be required to do, as stated by the hon. member. We have looked at these matters to see how it can be used. We must also keep in mind that there is a private elevator system in the western provinces. This is a government elevator. If the hon. member is suggesting that we put it in direct competition with the private elevator system, he should suggest that and we will bring in an amendment to the bill immediately to allow just that. That is, if he wants that kind of operation of the elevator.

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PRIVILEGE**MR. FOX—REASONS FOR RESIGNATION FROM MINISTRY**

Hon. Francis Fox (Argenteuil-Deux-Montagnes): Mr. Speaker, I would like to inform the House that I resigned from the cabinet on Friday. I would like to tell the House of the events that led to my resignation.

A few years ago, before I entered the cabinet, I was involved in a brief liaison with a married woman who became pregnant. She subsequently applied for and secured the required permission for a therapeutic abortion. On her admission to hospital, I signed the name of her husband to an admitting document.

This fact has become known in the last few days. I discussed it with the Prime Minister (Mr. Trudeau) and tendered my resignation, which he has accepted. I have today instructed my counsel to advise the attorney general of the province concerned so that he may be apprised of the matter.

These are the facts which the House should know. I take full responsibility for them. I would implore hon. members and the media to let these facts speak for themselves and not seek further details which would only cause harm to other individuals and families.

This incident in no way affected the work I undertook as Solicitor General, nor was it known to any official with whom I have worked.

I deeply regret the difficulty that my resignation may cause to the Prime Minister and to my colleagues in the cabinet. I consider it a great personal honour to have served during the

[Mr. Lang.]

past 16 months as a member of the cabinet and, through it, the people of Canada. I leave the office of Solicitor General of Canada under circumstances which I deeply regret but with the hope that the ministry and its agencies will have been well served during my tenure. Thank you.

QUESTIONS ON THE ORDER PAPER

[English]

(Questions answered orally are indicated by an asterisk.)

Mr. Wm. Andres (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of State (Multiculturalism)): Mr. Speaker, the following questions will be answered today: Nos. 451, 693, 702, 823, 834, 988 and 993.

[Text]

EXPENDITURES IN CONSTITUENCY OF NEW WESTMINSTER**Question No. 451—Mr. Leggatt:**

In each fiscal year since 1970, what amount was spent in the Constituency of New Westminster by the Department of Public Works and those agencies that report to it?

Mr. Frank Maine (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Public Works):

| Fiscal Year | From Department of Public Works Appropriations |
|-----------------------|---|
| 1970-71 | 444,864 |
| 1971-72 | 448,381 |
| 1972-73 | 891,539 |
| 1973-74 | 712,040 |
| 1974-75 | 781,125 |
| 1975-76 | 2,041,176 |
| 1976-77 | 3,820,884 |
| 1977-78 | 591,788 |
| (To October 31/77) | |

DEPARTMENT OF PUBLIC WORKS—OUTSIDE CONSULTANTS**Question No. 693—Mr. Howie:**

From January 1, 1977 to date, did the Department of Public Works hire outside consultants and, if so, how many?

Mr. Frank Maine (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Public Works): Consultants were hired for projects funded from the Department of Public Works appropriations and the Department of Public Works Working Capital Advance. From January 1, 1977, to November 16, 1977, the Department of Public Works hired 820 outside consultants primarily in the architectural and engineering field.