

Oral Questions

not confusing the improvement of elevators there with the coal port which is being planned for the future?

● (1452)

Hon. Otto E. Lang (Minister of Transport): No, Mr. Speaker, I am not confusing wheat and coal; but the hon. member is mistaking what I said. I indicated that I would expect construction to begin in the near future in relation to the expansion at Prince Rupert. Indeed, we will be improving the existing elevator and that work will be coming forward very quickly. We will also be moving ahead with the site preparation on Ridley Island on the assumption that a new terminal building will be built there. There are active discussions taking place now involving the Alberta government and some of the grain companies in connection with that terminal, and I am hoping that will put together the necessary equity and investment for a major terminal on Ridley Island. Obviously, the construction phase of the major terminal will take two or three years, but the work will be under way very soon.

Mr. Oberle: Is it reasonable to assume that the minister has not yet made any firm commitments to contractors or shippers of grain in respect of the improvement of the elevator facilities and grain handling facilities at Prince Rupert?

Mr. Lang: The contracts in relation to the existing elevator are, of course, the responsibility of my colleague, the Minister of Agriculture. The contract preparations are under way. In the case of Wrigley Island, our first project is the engineering studies which are required in order to ensure that we are building the causeway and the rail facilities in the correct location. That work is about to get under way. The construction phase will obviously follow that engineering phase.

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TRANSPORT**GOVERNMENT ASSISTANCE FOR URBAN TRANSIT SYSTEMS**

Mr. Otto Jelinek (High Park-Humber Valley): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of Transport. In view of the fact that this weekend the Ontario government began its urban transport improvement program with much needed renovations to Toronto's Union station, and because most necessary projected improvements cannot be completed, let alone started, as the result of this government's renegeing on its 1974 election promise of \$290 million for urban transit, a promise which was assumed to have been made in good faith—

Some hon. Members: Shame.

Mr. Jelinek: —I would like to ask the minister whether or not, before he starts drafting new election promises, he would consider fulfilling at least part of his 1974 promise in order

[Mr. Oberle.]

that urban transit projects in and around metropolitan Toronto and elsewhere can be completed?

Hon. Otto E. Lang (Minister of Transport): Mr. Speaker, the hon. member is well aware of the fact that we have made available \$230 million for the urban transportation assistance program, which included \$100 million of new money on the commuter side. That was not all we had intended to do in our program in 1974, but in face of the severe fiscal restraint being required it was the conscious and careful decision of this government to cut back, particularly in this area where the prime responsibility is that of the province and municipalities. However, we are making \$100 million of new money available, and a very flexible \$230 million for the urban transportation assistance program.

Mr. Jelinek: Mr. Speaker, in view of the minister's answer, I would like to put my question to the right hon. Prime Minister. Last year the same government made grants available in the millions of dollars, one of which was for such an earth-shattering project as "to study the role of the harmonica in a social culture of each region of Canada".

In view of the serious need to improve urban transit systems in Toronto as well as in other parts of Canada, could the Prime Minister reconsider the priorities pertaining to the government's expenditures and assure the House that his 1974 election campaign promises, at least in the sense of urban transit, will be fulfilled?

Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, I am not aware of the particular case quoted by the hon. member. I will look it up. I believe it must be a project under the Canada Works program and I suppose it is something that has been decided by a local council. I will look into this matter to see if the hon. member has a point.

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NATIONAL REVENUE**REGULATIONS RESPECTING CHARITABLE ORGANIZATIONS**

Miss Flora MacDonald (Kingston and the Islands): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Prime Minister. Yesterday the Prime Minister gave a commitment to the House that National Revenue circular No. 78-3 restricting the activities of charitable organizations would be suspended. Since we have taken the Prime Minister at his word in this regard, will he now inform the House of the nature of the communication that has been sent to the 36,000 registered charitable organizations in this country indicating that this circular is no longer in effect, that it has been suspended?

Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, I take it that the members of the public who are interested in this debate have heard my words of yesterday. They have