

AFTER RECESS

The House resumed at 2 p.m.

Mr. Johnston: Mr. Speaker, when I stopped at one o'clock, I tried to situate our special recovery projects within the policy announced by the Minister of Finance (Mr. Lalonde) in his budget speech. I gave the criteria we used to select these projects. I explained how they must be accelerated and how they would make a long-term contribution to the Canadian economy by creating permanent jobs as well as creating jobs in the short term.

I would like to get back to the point raised by our hon. colleague from the riding of Dartmouth-Halifax East (Mr. Forrestall), when he accused us of applying partisan criteria in selecting recovery projects for the Maritime Provinces.

An Hon. Member: He is not here.

Mr. Johnston: I believe he has left the House for the time being, but in any case, he accused us of not spending a nickel—those were his words—in Tory ridings in Nova Scotia, and in fact I think he said the Atlantic Provinces. Perhaps we should look at some of the details of this matter, Mr. Speaker.

[*English*]

When he said that these projects had not gone to any Conservative ridings I fear he had either not examined them or was reacting in a negative fashion to the program in question. When I look at some of the most important investments made under this program I find that there are a number of significant investments in Conservative ridings. As I explained, these are projects which were selected on the basis of economic criteria. They are projects which were moved ahead in the sense that they were brought into a nearer time frame. They are projects which Departments had already determined would be implemented at some time during this decade.

● (1410)

For example, let us look at the announcement made earlier this week by our colleagues, the Minister of the Environment (Mr. Roberts) and the regional Minister for New Brunswick, the Minister of Public Works (Mr. LeBlanc). On May 18, 1983, they announced the construction of the Maritime Forest Research Centre in Fredericton. That is a \$22.5 million federal investment. The centre is to be located on property which is owned by the New Brunswick Government, and it is my recollection Mr. Speaker,—and I do not think I stand to be corrected on this point—that it is to be located in the riding of the Hon. Member for York-Sunbury (Mr. Howie) and it will serve three Maritime Provinces. Now I certainly do not think that that looks like a project which, as the Hon. Member has said, is one of partisan advantage.

[*Translation*]

In fact, the work to be carried out in Fredericton will be done as part of our program, the program I described this morning and which my hon. colleague for Dartmouth-Halifax East is criticizing. The centre in question is an intergrated research and training complex in Fredericton will bring

Supply

together a number of organizations in the Maritime Provinces with an interest in forestry. Thus, the Canadian Forestry Service from Environment Canada, the New Brunswick Department of Natural Resources, the Forestry Research Group of the University of New Brunswick and the Maritime Forest Rangers School will take part in the project. This is indeed a very important project and also very important to the health of this industry. I fail to see how the Hon. Member can accuse us of being partisan about these choices. I see the Hon. Member has just taken his seat. Perhaps he would like to have an exchange of views with me during question period after my speech.

[*English*]

The Maritime Forestry Research Centre is one example which shows that there clearly is no partisan advantage.

I see also that the Government has announced that it is prepared to contribute up to \$18.25 million, another major investment of Canadian taxpayers' money, to build an Atlantic Veterinary College in Charlottetown, contingent on equal contribution by the four Atlantic Provinces. Here again is a project which will benefit the entire Atlantic region, a project which is obviously fundamental to the entire agricultural sector of the Atlantic region, and one of course which carries with it evident long-term economic benefits in the training of veterinarians for that part of Canada in particular, although I hope that we will see them in the rest of the country as well. This project is in response to a need which has been identified for some years of which all Members from the Atlantic Provinces are aware.

Again, Mr. Speaker, I believe that surely we cannot be accused of partisan advantage in the selection of that particular project. My understanding is that it is to be built in Charlottetown and located in the riding of Hillsborough which, at last count, was not represented by a Member from this side of the House.

I had the opportunity to exchange some comments with my hon friend, the Hon. Member for South Shore just before lunch, and my understanding is that on this very day, May 20, 1983, a small crafts harbour project totalling almost \$4 million was announced; \$4 million in small crafts harbour projects is a lot of money, and this project is apparently being announced in parts of the South Shore riding, the riding of the Member to whom I referred a moment ago. Again, this project will touch cities and towns represented by Members from both sides of the House. It is clear that when the Hon. Member says that not one Government nickel is spent in Tory ridings, he has not looked at the dossier and he is being partisan in his comments. I expect more than that from the Hon. Member.

I am pleased to see that the Hon. Member for St. John's East (Mr. McGrath) is in the House today because on May 13, 1983, my colleague, the Minister of State for Small Businesses and Tourism (Mr. Rompkey) and the Premier of Newfoundland announced some \$45 million for road work in the Province of Newfoundland. Of this \$45 million, some \$12