

*Oral Questions*

had with his representations to cabinet in the past week to find further funds? Does he have another \$10 million to make the grain elevator go, or does he consider it certain that it will go without any further support?

**Hon. Jean-Luc Pepin (Minister of Transport):** Madam Speaker, I have already indicated that the consortium has come to see us asking for more money on top of the \$32 million, increasing to \$37 million, which has already been committed to that enterprise. I have already told the House that they had two ideas in mind. The first one was for the consortium to try to find out from the bidders if they could get a reduction on the bids they received, and I understand that they have accomplished that. The second possibility was that the consortium could cut off some "unnecessary" part of the elevator, and they are working on that now. They would then come to us with that information and they would ask for the \$10 million which they suggested we might add to the previous amount. This is where we are now. We expect them to knock at the door very, very soon in order to put a case for an added amount of money.

● (1450)

**Mr. Fulton:** Madam Speaker, it is an interesting time for the government to start playing hard to get on getting money. Eighteen months ago it offered \$100 million to the same consortium, interest free, to build a larger elevator. Here we have a smaller elevator and they are asking the consortium to chop it even smaller. They are getting rid of the surge capacity. They are getting rid of all the footings. The \$65 million Falls River hydro project to provide power to Ridley Island has been cancelled. The CN bridgework between Terrace and Prince Rupert has been cancelled or indefinitely delayed.

## REQUEST FOR SUPPORT

**Mr. Jim Fulton (Skeena):** Madam Speaker, will the minister support this project? If necessary, will he take an equity position in the elevator to ensure that it goes ahead? Is it or is it not in the Canadian interest?

**Hon. Jean-Luc Pepin (Minister of Transport):** Madam Speaker, I am confused—

**Mr. Fulton:** That is right.

**Mr. Pepin:**—and I think I have good reason to be.

**Some hon. Members:** Hear, hear!

**Mr. Pepin:** The hon. member is mixing his provincial chickens with his federal eggs. He is throwing it all at us now in a hodge-podge manner, not making a distinction between what the federal government and what the provincial governments are doing in this matter. The federal government is doing tremendous things for the port of Prince Rupert. My

friend should recognize that, and usually he does, but today he is in a pugnacious mood. We have provided money for the three growing facilities there—one in grain, one in coal, and a coming one in petrochemicals.

The judgment as to whether \$37 million is enough or whether it should be \$47 million is one which is debatable, but one on which the government has to make a decision in relation to other investments it has made in that port and has to make elsewhere. This is not a question of philosophy; this is a question of quantum.

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[Translation]

## ENERGY

## EXPORT OF POWER BY QUEBEC HYDRO—POSSIBLE DIFFICULTIES

**Mr. Pierre Deniger (La Prairie):** Madam Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources and concerns the statement made yesterday before the Special Committee on Energy by the Chairman of the Board of Directors of Hydro-Québec, Mr. Joseph Bourbeau. Could the minister inform the House and the Canadian people whether he has been advised of Mr. Bourbeau's statement that an amendment to the National Energy Board Act, namely, Bill C-108, might create certain problems for Hydro-Québec, since the proposed legislation would make it possible to modify a power export licence for reasons of public convenience and necessity, and might cost Hydro-Québec \$10 billion, and could the minister also inform us whether he has heard that Mr. Bourbeau stated he could not care less about the power corridor between Newfoundland and the United States?

**Hon. Marc Lalonde (Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources):** Madam Speaker, I have, in fact, been advised of Mr. Bourbeau's statement. Some time ago I heard that Hydro-Québec was worried about a specific provision to which the hon. member is referring. I asked my officials to get in touch with Hydro-Québec and obtain further details. Unfortunately, we have been unable to get additional information as yet. We have also been in touch with a number of public utility companies in the United States, and we have received no indication that the proposed provision might create any problems. However, I can assure the hon. member and the House that the government will not allow a provision that would cause such prejudice, if that is indeed the case, to remain before Parliament. If after consultations, which I hope we shall soon be able to have with the appropriate authorities, it is concluded that prejudice is a possibility, we shall not hesitate to amend the bill to ensure there is no prejudice to the Hydro-Québec contract.