

That is exactly what I started to put to the minister before Your Honour, quite appropriately, I must confess, cut me off. That is the kind of blackmail which the citizens in Vancouver are saying is not satisfactory.

Can the minister tell me whether the proper federal contribution to that art gallery, which is not out of line—it has been done with other cities, and the hon. minister knows it—is going to be stopped because of the change in the lottery situation?

Mr. Roberts: Madam Speaker, I do not think the hon. gentleman's words accurately reflect the response I made to him. There used to be a program of capital assistance for a variety of cultural institutions across the country. In my view, regrettably but necessarily in view of past restraint programs, that capital assistance came to an end. It was the hope of the government that the accession of Loto Canada revenues to the federal government would enable the government to support a variety of very useful projects such as the one the hon. member has described.

I do not agree that it is a question of blackmail to simply reiterate the fact that the previous capital funding program disappeared under restraint, and it was hoped to use Loto Canada funds to make up the difference. The fact of the matter is that under the previous Liberal government there was a guarantee of a much stronger flow of funds from Loto Canada to support sports and the arts than could take place as a result of the arrangements which the Conservative government made to turn over the essential direction of Loto Canada to the provinces. That is not a question of blackmail, Madam Speaker; it is a question of the fact.

The decision which the Conservatives took, with whatever purposes in mind, has made it much more difficult to find funds for those purposes. This does not exclude the possibility that other funds may be found, but the action of the Conservative government has made it much more difficult to respond to that kind of request.

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● (1150)

MINING

COMPOSITION OF NATIONAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE— GOVERNMENT ASSISTANCE IN QUEBEC MINE TRAGEDY

Mr. Lyle S. Kristiansen (Kootenay West): Madam Speaker, I should like to direct my question to the Minister of State for Mines. It arises from remarks made by the minister on May 28 at the annual meeting of the Mining Association of Canada, that she—

—is prepared to meet with any group from the mining industry, whether they represent industry, the union, or others, to seek ways to make the mining industry a safe and healthy place to work—

In view of her intention to “open the doors to labour”, to overcome “insufficient communication” between labour and management in the mining industry, and in view of the minister's recent announcement of the names of those who will serve

on the national advisory committee on the mining industry, can the minister tell the House why—

Madam Speaker: Order, please. I feel that some preambles are really too long. Would the hon. member come to his question.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Madam Speaker: We are not able to do justice to all members who want to be recognized. It is important that hon. members discipline themselves and not precede their questions with long preambles, especially when they are reading them.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Kristiansen: Madam Speaker, I was just about to begin my short question when you rose. Will the minister explain, in light of those remarks, her recent announcement that all those who were serving on the national advisory committee on the mining industry come from the top executive level of management, and there is no one from labour; and will she give a commitment to change that in the next few weeks?

Hon. Judy Erola (Minister of State (Mines)): Madam Speaker, may I assure the hon. member for Kootenay West that I intend to do just that. I opened the doors to labour just this morning. I spoke with Stewart Cooke, of the United Steelworkers of America—I speak to him on an average of twice a week—and in fact I discussed with him the possibility of including the coal miners from the east coast in some sort of committee in which we can discuss the health and safety of the workers. I intend to pursue it with great vigour.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Kristiansen: Madam Speaker, my supplementary question is to the same minister. In the same spirit, and in view of the message just received from the United Steelworkers of America and the Ontario president of Inco regarding the eight miners buried at Val d'Or, Quebec, and in view of the apparent inability or lack of will on the part of the federal government so far to do anything, will the minister now act on this offer of Inco and the Steelworkers and co-ordinate assistance in this emergency? Further, will she undertake to form a standing, mobile national rescue team which can assist in this kind of life and death emergency in the future?

Mrs. Erola: It is just such a discussion that I had this morning with the minister of mines in Quebec, the hon. Mr. Bérubé. He assured me, as the hon. member is aware, that the matter is under provincial jurisdiction, that it is well co-ordinated and that they require at present no additional assistance. We have offered him whatever assistance and expertise is necessary through our department, and we are awaiting the call for help.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!