

Oral Questions

production. That will obviously have a very real effect on employment, a very real effect on stimulating the private sector which is engaged in the production of films and television programs.

The Hon. Member knows, as well as I do, the number of new opportunities which will be made available in the creative community in Canada as a result of the setting up of this fund.

Mr. Beatty: If the Minister of Finance had not made his \$200 million gaffe on Monday night, he would have had \$200 million sitting there which could have been used for this production fund without increasing taxes. Apparently this money was just sitting there, ready to be used, but the Minister of Communications did not have access to it.

• (1140)

DEREGULATION OF SATELLITE RECEPTION EARTH STATIONS— ROLE OF CABLE COMPANIES

Hon. Perrin Beatty (Wellington-Dufferin-Simcoe): Let me ask a question relating to the Government's broadcasting strategy. In view of the fact that the announcement made by the Minister of Communications that the Government would be deregulating the use of earth stations has led to a number of institutions disconnecting from the cable system, yet cable companies are still being prevented from competing fairly and offering satellite services on cable, when will the Government act on its commitments and permit cable companies to compete fairly? Can the Minister confirm the fact that it could be up to a year before he actually delivers on the commitment that he made in his policy statement?

Hon. Francis Fox (Minister of Communications): Madam Speaker, the Hon. Member knows full well that a number of the matters that were contained in the broadcasting policy are matters that have to be implemented by the CRTC. We have indicated quite clearly the general direction that we see broadcasting heading over the next few years.

The Hon. Member, speaking on behalf of his Party, has not really indicated whether or not he thinks this is the direction in which we should be headed. I should add that there has indeed been a general consensus as far as I can tell, and I know the Hon. Member attended the same *Financial Post* conference on broadcasting that I did, that there seems to be a very strong support from the broadcasting community and the cable industry itself in Canada for the direction the Government intends to go in the area of broadcasting.

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SHIPBUILDING

INQUIRY RESPECTING GOVERNMENT PROGRAMS

Mr. Ray Skelly (Comox-Powell River): Madam Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce. It pertains to some provisions in that rather right wing budget that was presented in the House the other day. As an aside, it would appear that the Minister of Finance might be

thinking seriously of challenging the Conservative leadership with his budget.

Much was made of the question of vessel acquisition and shipbuilding. There have been three programs over the years which seem to be hanging in limbo. First is the Patrol Frigate Program, second is the one that both the Conservatives and the Liberal Government announced, the \$300 million Coast Guard Acquisition Program, and finally the extension of Canada's 200-mile limit in the recent shipbuilding program. We have seen nothing concrete laid down. Is this just another promise, or will the Minister give us an indication of when the Government will make those announcements concerning the Patrol Frigate Program, the Coast Guard Vessel Acquisition Program, and when it intends to implement the recent shipbuilding policy that it proposed in the House?

Hon. Ed Lumley (Minister of Industry, Trade and Commerce and Minister of Regional Economic Expansion): Madam Speaker, first with respect to the shipbuilding policy, that program is already under way. As a matter of fact we recently made an announcement to a shipyard of \$1.7 million assistance for a major contract. Also, my colleague, the Minister of State for Economic Development, will be making some announcements next week. I think the Minister of Finance has already indicated that some of these projects will be in vessel procurement.

PATROL FRIGATE PROGRAM

Mr. Ray Skelly (Comox-Powell River): Madam Speaker, certainly one of the largest programs in place is the Patrol Frigate Program. That certainly should have been out long ago. It was our understanding that we would be hearing about it in the late spring or early summer. It now appears that that Program has been pushed back even further. Can the Minister give some indication of when the Government will move on this Program and give a real shot in the arm to the shipbuilding industry?

Hon. J.-J. Blais (Minister of Supply and Services): Madam Speaker, since the Canadian Patrol Frigate Program is one that comes under my responsibility, I am pleased to advise the hon. gentleman that, as I have indicated in the House previously, the Program is proceeding on schedule. I trust that we would be in a position to make the final decision in terms of the identification of the contractor by next July, 1983.

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RAILWAYS

CROWNST PASS RATE—SUPPORT FROM WESTERN CANADA FOR PROPOSED CHANGES

Mr. David Kilgour (Edmonton-Strathcona): Madam Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of Transport. Will he tell us which groups or individual producers in western Canada are in favour of his plan to restructure the Crow rate?