

munity based quotas in light of the support extended by these recent reports and the needs of communities like Canso?

Hon. John C. Crosbie (Minister for International Trade): Mr. Speaker, the question of community quotas is one that has been examined in the past. It was examined, for example, by Mr. Michael Kirby when he was appointed by the last government to examine the fishery.

Mr. Michael Kirby in that report, in published speeches made in the last month or so and in newspaper articles has pointed out that economically it would be suicide for the east coast fishery if we were to have a system of community quotas. This is the advice that we have received from the experts who have studied the subject, including Mr. Michael Kirby.

We will, of course, continue to examine that issue to see if there is any variation on that suggestion that could be carried out. With respect to wondering what the government is doing, there is a \$130 million program. It is not money that was already previously assigned to Atlantic Canada. That is simply 100 per cent incorrect.

It is money under the POWA program, the program for older workers, that was never assigned before. It is money for a program leading up to the POWA program for those aged 50 to 54, a new program unheard of in Canada before. It is a community development fund when there was never any community development fund before in the fishing industry of Canada. That is all money that was not assigned to Atlantic Canada.

Mr. Chris Axworthy (Saskatoon—Clark's Crossing): Mr. Speaker, I guess the answer to that Harris recommendation is no as well.

Atlantic Canadians are not just waiting for the \$130 million. They are waiting for resources to save their communities. I wonder whether this government is going to accept any of the 29 Harris recommendations. For example, is it going to accept the recommendation that more resources are needed for surveillance and enforcement or are we just going to have to sit and then get another no answer? Atlantic Canadians want action. They do not want more talk.

Oral Questions

Hon. John C. Crosbie (Minister for International Trade): Mr. Speaker, the hon. gentleman is a little premature in urging immediate action. The report was made public last Friday. The minister is in the process of consulting interested parties today. The minister will be making an announcement in the next few days.

With reference to the question of whether we are going to put more resources into scientific investigation, enforcement and surveillance, I can put the hon. gentleman's mind at rest now. The answer is yes, y-e-s. The hon. gentleman will now be able to sleep tonight.

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AGRICULTURE

Mr. Maurice Foster (Algoma): Mr. Speaker, my question is to the Acting Prime Minister. One year ago the government cut \$500 million out of the budget of the Department of Agriculture. Last month it cut \$441 million out of the Agriculture estimates.

The government has known since November that it would need to have a special program for western farmers to assist in their cash flow problems. The program announced last Friday by the Minister of Agriculture requires federal-provincial funding. Can the Acting Prime Minister assure western farmers that these funds will be paid before the end of the month?

Mr. Murray Cardiff (Parliamentary Secretary to Deputy Prime Minister, President of the Privy Council and Minister of Agriculture): Mr. Speaker, ongoing negotiations with officials are taking place all this week. When the ministers return this weekend we are hopeful that we can put together a package and have a response to the farmers of Canada.

At least by tabling and putting our \$500 million on the table, it has sent a very strong signal to the farmers. I know the farmers in Ontario, the area I represent, feel quite positive that the federal government is supporting them. I know there is confidence out there already. I am quite sure an agreement will be reached with the provinces very quickly.

Mr. Maurice Foster (Algoma): Mr. Speaker, last year the government cancelled the interest-free portion of the advance payments program. Last Friday it announced that FCC interest rates will go up to 14.25 per