

### Oral Questions

point, an agreement in principle was reached and a certain sum of money, quite substantial, was left on the table by the federal government.

Following this agreement in principle, however, the government of the province changed its mind with regard to two major aspects of this project. One of them concerns the question of responsibility for putting together, maintaining and operating the transportation of the coal from the mine to the port. Originally, it was supposed to be the BCR; now the government of British Columbia has asked CN to do it, and CN, energetically and valiantly, has agreed to accept this responsibility—in difficult circumstances, it must be said. Using figures which were available, they have tried to put together a package, on which they reported to us yesterday. That package is now being refined, hardened and analysed, and the minister in charge of economic development at the federal level will be in touch with his counterpart in British Columbia in a few days.

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### NATIONAL REVENUE

#### DUTY-FREE SHOPS AT BORDER CROSSING POINTS

**Hon. Marcel Lambert (Edmonton West):** Madam Speaker, my question is addressed to the Minister of National Revenue. Will the hon. gentleman advise the House when the administration intends to implement a decision taken many months ago by the previous administration to provide for the opening of duty-free shops at border crossing points with the United States?

Can he advise us that the delay in implementing this decision is a matter of inertia? Or is it the intention to make the announcement with due fanfare about the end of the tourist season?

**Hon. William Rompkey (Minister of National Revenue):** I want to thank the hon. member for the question and tell him that the record of this government is certainly not one of inertia, but indeed the opposite.

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

**Mr. Rompkey:** We are reviewing the work which was done previously. I doubt there will be substantial change, but there will be some changes. I share the hon. member's concern with regard to bringing forward this policy as soon as possible. I think it is important for business in Canada, particularly the tourist industry, and I hope we can bring forward a policy in the shortest possible time.

**Mr. Lambert:** Would the minister indicate the area in which revision is required, or is it merely a formality of dotting the "i's" and crossing the "t's" and making some changes for the sake of change in a decision which had been years in preparation, which had involved years of planning and which had been hardened and firmed by the cabinet many months ago?

**Mr. Rompkey:** Madam Speaker, particularly in the area of licensing, I want to be assured that the best possible policy is put forward. I hope we shall be in a position very shortly to bring forward that policy.

**An hon. Member:** The machinery will be good for Liberals.

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### CULTURAL AFFAIRS

#### GOVERNMENT SUPPORT FOR VANCOUVER ART GALLERY

**Hon. John A. Fraser (Vancouver South):** Madam Speaker, I would like to put a question to the acting prime minister. Some months ago—in fact, almost a year ago—in the city of Vancouver a number of private citizens raised over \$4 million as a contribution to a new art gallery. As a consequence of those funds being raised on the basis that pledges would be sustained as long as the federal government matched them, the Conservative government made a commitment that the money would be available for a new art gallery in Vancouver, which is long overdue. Almost all those who are knowledgeable in this matter, from the east coast to the west coast, have supported and endorsed the object of the exercise in Vancouver.

I want to ask the acting prime minister, or whoever is prepared to answer, whether this commitment which the government I represented made to the city of Vancouver is to be honoured, or whether we must put up with what a Vancouver editorial called the "blackmail argument" put forward by the Secretary of State, that it would only come along if, indeed—

**Madam Speaker:** Order, please. I think the hon. member has already put his question.

**Hon. John Roberts (Minister of State for Science and Technology and Minister of the Environment):** Madam Speaker, speaking today for the Secretary of State, I would reply that the situation of the Vancouver gallery is one of very great concern to us, particularly to me, as I was secretary of state at the time the original discussions took place.

I think it fair to say, Madam Speaker, that as a government we are very anxious to provide what support we can, but it is undoubtedly true that the initiative of the Conservative government in turning over to the provinces essential control of Loto Canada funds has made it much more difficult to respond to the request which was made to us. As you know, Madam Speaker, the question of the status of Loto Canada is one which preoccupies the government at the present time. I simply express the hope that it will be possible at some stage to provide the kind of support which is very much needed in the area. But at the moment—

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

**Mr. Fraser:** I want to ask the hon. member whether it is now the policy of the government, because of changes in the lottery situation, that there is to be no way for something as vital to the cultural community of western Canada as that art gallery.