

Projects. In his Budget last year the Minister of Finance indicated that the recovery program was going to be led by these projects. Yesterday he indicated the Government's priority was to fast track these projects to make sure they provide maximum benefits to Canadians. Can the Minister explain to the House, given the intent to fast track these projects, why a confidential report from his Department indicates that, of the \$625 million set aside for those projects, only \$396 million has been spent to date? Why has it taken so long to get these projects under way when so many Canadians are hard pressed?

**Hon. Roy MacLaren (Minister of State (Finance)):** Mr. Speaker, the projects have in fact gone forward at an accelerated pace. Some 232 projects with a total cost of \$1.96 billion, some 81 per cent of the total \$2.4 billion program, will have been started by February 28 of this year. There have, of course, been variations from region to region and from project to project, but I would be glad to provide the Hon. Member opposite with full information about the current status of the projects.

#### USE OF UNEXPENDED FUNDS

**Mr. Nelson A. Riis (Kamloops-Shuswap):** Mr. Speaker, considering that only \$396 million of the \$625 million allocated for the fast tracking of Special Recovery Capital Projects has been spent, a little over half, would the Minister of Employment confirm to this House that this money not spent will not appear in tomorrow's Budget as new additional job creation funds?

**Hon. John Roberts (Minister of Employment and Immigration):** Mr. Speaker, the Hon. Member addresses his question to me, but the Special Recovery Capital Projects are under the direction of my colleague, the Minister of State for Economic Development. In so far as his reference to what may or may not be in the Budget tomorrow is concerned, he will simply have to wait and see what takes place tomorrow.

#### NUMBER OF JOBS CREATED

**Mr. Nelson A. Riis (Kamloops-Shuswap):** Mr. Speaker, I want to ask the same Minister a very serious question. We are seeing a lot of money moving, so called, into the constituencies of Canada, it seems a great deal more into Liberal constituencies, but a lot of constituents are asking how much are we getting for this investment. How much are we getting for the \$500,000 going into that Toronto riding? Has the Minister put into place something to ensure that the moneys spent on job creation are accountable? In other words, has there been some indication of the number of jobs created as a result of these investments?

**Hon. John Roberts (Minister of Employment and Immigration):** Mr. Speaker, the hon. gentleman is making an assumption, and I would like to try to clarify the first part of his question. The only programs based on a constituency allocation

are one component of the Canada Works Program and also a component of the Summer Canada Program. As I think we have tried to make clear repeatedly, the special employment funds on which Members have been commenting in the last few days are not allocated on a constituency by constituency basis.

**Mr. Nielsen:** Grit by Grit.

**Mr. Roberts:** As to the evaluation of the programs, it is true that in a general way we do try to analyse what the job impacts are. That can be more or less easy or harder to do depending upon the spin-off effects and the nature of the projects.

#### BUDGET EXPENDITURE TARGET

**Hon. John C. Crosbie (St. John's West):** Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the same Minister, and has to do with the Special Recovery Capital Projects Program announced by the Minister of Finance in last year's Budget. In that budget statement the Minister said "earth will be moved, steel will be rigged, and concrete will be poured". It is reported today that the 121 projects were divided into 283 subprojects and work had begun on only 13 by September. Only \$388 million is going to be spent this year out of \$725 million allocated.

In view of these facts would the Minister tell the House how anyone can be expected to believe anything in a Budget any longer when the last Budget said \$725 million would be spent and only \$388 million is spent? It is not steel that is going to be rigged, it is the truth that is going to be rigged. Will the Minister explain how he rigged the truth, and what will be the truth tomorrow? Can we believe a word in that Budget tomorrow about employment related projects?

**Hon. Roy MacLaren (Minister of State (Finance)):** Mr. Speaker, the answer to the last question is yes, the Member can believe what is in tomorrow's Budget. The answer to the first question I gave earlier. I cited the 232 projects with a total cost of approximately \$1.96 billion which will have been started by February 28. The projects are under way, the concrete is being poured, the steel is being erected, and the capital projects are going forward in the way foreseen in the April Budget.

#### PREPARATION OF ESTIMATES

**Hon. John C. Crosbie (St. John's West):** Mr. Speaker, my supplementary will not be to the Minister in charge of rigging; I will send it to the Minister of State for Finance. The official in charge of communications for this project, Robert Irvine, is quoted today as saying that federal spending projections were very rough at budget time last year. He goes on to say that \$100 million was added to this fund as a result of the leaking of the Minister of Finance last year when he brought down the Budget. He says the Government has not yet figured how to spend that money.