

Oral Questions

Mr. Roberts: Either that is the case, or there has been a tremendous misunderstanding expressed in relation to one of our programs. If the hon. gentleman will give me the details of the person involved, I will check to see if someone has given the wrong information. Without the specifics, I cannot inquire into a specific case.

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CANADA MORTGAGE AND HOUSING CORPORATION

SOCIAL HOUSING POLICY STUDY

Mr. John McDermid (Brampton-Georgetown): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Public Works who is responsible for CMHC. A study on social housing policy has been going on within CMHC for quite some time now. Could the Minister tell us the status of that study?

Hon. Roméo LeBlanc (Minister of Public Works): Mr. Speaker, the final results of the study were circulated to provincial Governments and interested groups, and MPs, I believe. If not, I will be happy to send it. These organizations have been asked to prepare comments. Some have come forward, but I still have not had a complete enough reaction to be able to indicate when the policy recommendation would come forward. I hope to do that before the summer.

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SPECIAL RECOVERY CAPITAL PROJECTS PROGRAM

HALIFAX WATERFRONT COMPLEX

Mr. Howard Crosby (Halifax West): Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Minister of Public Works as well, involving the Special Recovery Capital Projects for the City of Halifax. In April of 1983 his colleague, the Hon. Member for Halifax, announced a \$51 million office complex for the Halifax waterfront. Ten months went by, nothing happened, and then the same Member announced a \$30 million complex for another part of the city. Can the Minister of Public Works explain just what is going on? Will he take the opportunity to tell us how it comes about that a \$51 million waterfront complex shrinks to a \$30 million office building in another part of the city? What has happened to all the architectural drawings and processes, not to mention the loss of 1,000 jobs that were promised?

Mr. Regan: That will not save your seat.

Hon. Roméo LeBlanc (Minister of Public Works): Mr. Speaker, it seems to me that if I were to get a building worth \$30 million, or \$50 million, or \$20 million, or \$10 million in my city, I would be very happy and proud. The fact is that there has been some delay because of the difficulty in obtaining the site for the building. However, after difficult negotiations we have had to resort to expropriation, which process is now underway. Meanwhile planning for the building and preparing specifications for tendering are going on, and I expect the matter will be resolved in six or eight weeks.

STARTING DATE INQUIRY

Mr. Howard Crosby (Halifax West): Mr. Speaker, that is a new twist for the Liberal Party. They used to say: "What's a million?" Now they are saying: "What's \$20 million?" Why was the project reduced from the \$50 million initially proposed, which would have provided 1,000 jobs according to the Hon. Member? I want some guarantee from the Minister, not from the Member for Halifax who has made many promises, that this project will go ahead. I would like to know when it will start, that is to say, when do you start employing people and stop having press conferences?

Mr. McDermid: He has announced it six times.

Hon. Roméo LeBlanc (Minister of Public Works): Mr. Speaker, the project will go ahead with the enthusiastic support and assistance of my colleague, the Minister of State for International Trade, and in spite of the carping criticism of the Hon. Member.

Mr. Crosby: We will see.

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HEALTH

ST. REGIS INDIAN RESERVE STUDY

Mr. Terry Sargeant (Selkirk-Interlake): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of National Health and Welfare who yesterday released volume I of Dr. Selikoff's study on environmental contamination of Cornwall Island. This past January I spoke to an associate of Dr. Selikoff in New York who told me that the study was complete and would be in the hands of the Department by mid-February. It is now mid-March, and I would like to ask the Minister why, one month later, only one part of this report is being released.

Hon. Monique Bégin (Minister of National Health and Welfare): Mr. Speaker, the study on the contaminants found in the reserve is in fact, up until now, already 18 months late. We have been putting on pressure in all ways, including a letter from the Department of Justice, but I do not want to turn the problem into a legal one. We have no reason to worry, other than the fact that Dr. Selikoff and his team have undertaken maybe too much work at the same time.

● (1150)

What we received yesterday, and that I released immediately, was the first part of the health study giving the results of the fluoride level in the blood of the people living on the St. Régis Reserve. I think it is important to have the first part at least completed and released into the hands of the Indians who are before the tribunal in the United States, and who, I hope, will be able to make use of that study.