

*Inquiries of the Ministry*

governor of the province, are making a nationwide appeal for funds to help those who are destitute and homeless, I wonder whether the federal government has made any decision with reference to the suggestion I put to them yesterday, that a substantial financial contribution be made to the Alberni valley disaster fund.

**Hon. Arthur Laing (Minister of Northern Affairs and National Resources):** If I may say so, I think the sequence of events now is such that we would have to await a decision or advice from the provincial government; because I have now had a wire from Hon. Wesley D. Black telling us that we will be advised of the extent of the damage after a provincial cabinet meeting to be held on Thursday. So I think any participation by the federal government should now await a request from the provincial government.

**Mr. Douglas:** I recognize that this would be true with respect to a general rehabilitation program. What I am asking is this. Would the government be prepared to consider making an immediate contribution to the fund designed to help those who are homeless at the moment?

**Mr. Laing:** I am certain that the remarks of the hon. member will be noted by the cabinet; but again, if we are to participate in the work of rehabilitation in that area which addresses itself principally to those who suffer as a result of the complete destruction of 45 homes, we should probably await a report from the provincial government because we have been dealing with them.

**Right Hon. J. G. Diefenbaker (Leader of the Opposition):** In connection with the matter raised by the hon. member for Burnaby-Coquitlam, may I say that a telephone call reached my office a few moments before the sitting opened to the effect that the damage runs into tens of millions of dollars and that some indication on the part of the federal government—with full respect, of course, to the constitutional proprieties to which the minister has made reference—would raise the hopes of those people and give them determination. I do not think the minister would be interfering with the constitutional division of power and the need for a direct request for assistance from the province of British Columbia if he could indicate—and I know he would receive support from all parts of the house in doing so—that a substantial contribution would be made to the disaster fund.

**Mr. Laing:** I sincerely hope that the estimate of the damage given to the house by the right hon. gentleman is inaccurate. I have from Mr. Black this morning a statement that

the preliminary estimate made by the civic authorities is a total of \$5 million, including the industries concerned in that area. I think in the light of these statements which have been made we should still await a report from the province, but I am certain that the remarks made by the Leader of the Opposition and the hon. member for Burnaby-Coquitlam will be duly noted by members of the government.

**INDUSTRY****PETERBOROUGH, ONT.—REPORTED INSTALLATION OF PRODUCTION EQUIPMENT**

On the orders of the day:

**Mr. M. J. Moreau (York-Scarborough):** I have a question for the Minister of Industry. In view of the implication left yesterday by the hon. member for Hastings-Frontenac, is the minister aware of press reports in the *Globe and Mail* indicating that Outboard Marine Corporation will instal \$100,000 worth of production equipment in Peterborough this year in order to manufacture snowmobiles, mainly for export to the United States?

**Hon. C. M. Drury (Minister of Industry):** I thank my hon. friend very much for this information, which I am sure is most welcome.

**LABOUR CONDITIONS****THETFORD MINES, QUE.—REQUEST FOR EXTENSION OF WINTER WORKS PROGRAM**

On the orders of the day:

**Mr. Raymond Langlois (Megantic):** I have a question for the Minister of Labour. Would the hon. gentleman consider extending the winter works program to the end of May in the Thetford Mines district to relieve the situation which has arisen following the lay-off of 600 men due to the closing of two asbestos mines?

**Mr. Speaker:** I think this is an appropriate time to suggest that that is the type of question which should be placed on the order paper.

[Later:]

**Mr. Langlois:** Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order. I do not think my last question was one that should be put on the order paper. I asked the Minister of Labour whether he would consider extending the winter works program. Would the minister consider that solution, in order to help these 600 men who are out of work at the moment, plus the others who were out of work before that?