

Oral Questions

with the freedom of the press that we are moving to a larger room, because of the great onrush from the press of all quarters to hear me speak.

[Translation]

AGREEMENT CONCERNING RENTAL OF NEW MANPOWER
DEPARTMENT OFFICES IN ROUYN, QUEBEC—GOVERNMENT
POSITION

Mr. Gilles Caouette (Témiscamingue): Mr. Speaker, I am pleased to hear the Prime Minister's answer where he seems to attach some importance to the space for newsmen.

My question is directed to the Minister of Public Works. An agreement was made in Rouyn to rent new offices for regrouping unemployment insurance and manpower offices to give more space to the staff, and this agreement was delayed over the years to the point that employees work in offices which are too small. They were advised to wait for the new offices which would—

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. If the hon. member has a question he should ask it immediately.

Mr. Caouette (Témiscamingue): My question is coming and if hon. members on the government side would listen perhaps they would understand. As a matter of fact, there was an agreement to rent new offices. Is the minister aware that recently his department cancelled that agreement and that they do not want to reconsider it in any way? Is the minister prepared to reevaluate this situation?

Hon. Judd Buchanan (Minister of Public Works and Minister of State for Science and Technology): No, Mr. Speaker, I am not aware of this fact, but I shall be very pleased to inquire about this and to inform the hon. member.

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[English]

FISHERIES

EXPANSION OF ROBERTS BANK, B.C., FACILITIES—EFFECT ON
SPAWNING GROUNDS

Mr. Stuart Leggatt (New Westminster): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of Fisheries and the Environment: it concerns the rather massive expansion of the Roberts Bank port in the estuary of the Fraser River.

Clear evidence has been presented to the environmental panel that there will be substantial damage to about 300 acres of spawning grounds, with the potential loss of some \$60 million in the future. Would the minister advise the House whether it is his intention to use the new fisheries legislation to ensure that construction does not destroy the fish habitat at the estuary in the Fraser River?

Hon. Roméo LeBlanc (Minister of Fisheries and the Environment): Mr. Speaker, I am very happy that the hon. member

[Mr. Trudeau.]

has obviously read what officials of my department put forward as a position of sound conservation and protection of the habitat.

The legislation, which was passed unanimously by this House and which gives us power to prevent damage to spawning grounds, will be utilized if it is found to be applicable in this case. Certainly, the position taken by my officials was cleared with me and I intend to act accordingly.

COST OF EXPANSION OF ROBERTS BANK, B.C., FACILITIES

Mr. Stuart Leggatt (New Westminster): Mr. Speaker, my supplementary question is for the Minister of State (Environment). I am pleased to hear that the Minister of Fisheries and the Environment indicates that he will act in accordance with the law.

My question to the Minister of State (Environment) concerns the environmental assessment panel, under his jurisdiction, with regard to the Roberts Bank development which is now looking into environmental questions. One question that has not been put before the panel is the matter of the estimated cost of the construction. The chairman of the Vancouver harbours board indicated he would not release that figure to the commission. Could the minister indicate to the House why the estimated cost of that project has not been put before the public and before that inquiry?

Hon. Len Marchand (Minister of State (Environment)): Mr. Speaker, this question should more properly be put to my colleague, the Minister of Transport, who is acting as proponent of the project. I will check, on behalf of my colleague, to find out why that kind of figure could not have been put. It is my view and my wish that all kinds of information pertinent to that project going ahead should be put before the panel.

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THE CANADIAN ECONOMY

PURCHASE BY PETRO-CANADA OF SHARES IN PACIFIC
PETROLEUMS

Mr. James Gillies (Don Valley): Mr. Speaker, may I put a question to the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources? Is the offer being made by Petro-Canada to Phillips Petroleum being made to all owners of outstanding stock of Pacific Petroleum Ltd. at the same price?

Hon. Alastair Gillespie (Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources): Mr. Speaker, I made it quite clear that Petro-Canada wants to pick up all the shares of Pacific Petroleum, and it is the intention of Petro-Canada that all shareholders would get the same price.

Mr. Gillies: A supplementary question. Could the minister explain why shares of Pacific Petroleum were selling at \$10 below offer price on the Toronto Stock Exchange today?

Mr. Gillespie: Mr. Speaker, it is not for me to speculate on that matter. It may have something to do with the fact that the