

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. If the hon. member has a supplementary, will he please put it?

Mr. Holmes: I would like to ask the minister if she would give very serious consideration to referring the report of the Science Council of Canada to the appropriate committee or subcommittees, and give very serious consideration to their recommendation to establish a national advisory council on occupational and environmental health in order to correct this serious problem with regard to mercury poisoning.

Miss Bégin: Mr. Speaker, I believe that question should be directed to the minister responsible for the Science Council. I understood the question to be on the urgent need for research. I assured the hon. member that a major research project was going to be signed in a few days by myself and authorities of the Quebec government, McGill University and a representative of the Indian groups of Quebec. I can also say that further to the press release I issued on November 25, results of decisions made by my department for which I am responsible, and about which I am knowledgeable, are now being discussed with leaders of bands across the country.

* * *

TRANSPORT

DATE WHEN HARBOUR PATROL BOAT WILL BE PROVIDED FOR VANCOUVER

Mr. Ron Huntington (Capilano): Mr. Speaker, in the absence of the Minister of Transport, I will direct my question to the acting minister. In view of the fact the Minister of Transport has put four Vancouver shipyards, all in need of work, to the expense of preparing tenders and design specifications for a new Vancouver harbour patrol boat, and has called for quotes on these tenders, when will the minister take the initiative to provide a Canada built harbour control vessel for the port of Vancouver, the largest and busiest harbour on the west coast of the North American continent?

[Translation]

Mr. Charles Lapointe (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Transport): Mr. Speaker, the suggestion made by the hon. member is very interesting and I will surely tell the minister about it as soon as he is back.

[English]

Mr. Huntington: Why did the Minister of Transport purchase through a straw company called Halifax Fishing Ventures Limited a United States built vessel that is nothing but a pile of junk, is not seaworthy and lies high and dry in shame under a Vancouver bridge?

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The question seems to be somewhat argumentative.

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mr. Hnatyshyn: On a point of order.

Oral Questions

Some hon. Members: Order.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. Members will realize that the question asked by the hon. member is argumentative and seeks information which is available on the order paper.

Mr. Hnatyshyn: On a point of order, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The hon. member for Algoma.

* * *

REGIONAL ECONOMIC EXPANSION

MICHIGAN-MANITOULIN FERRY SERVICE AND DEVELOPMENT IN NORTHEASTERN ONTARIO—REQUEST FOR REPORT ON NEGOTIATIONS

Mr. Maurice Foster (Algoma): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the Minister of Regional Economic Expansion. In view of the special development problems facing northeastern Ontario—

Mr. Stevens: Argumentative.

Mr. Foster: —and in view of the minister's recent meeting with Ontario government ministers responsible for regional development in the province of Ontario—

Mr. Gillies: Argumentative.

Some hon. Members: Order.

Mr. Nowlan: Come on, let's have some order.

Some hon. Members: Hear, hear!

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. The hon. member for Algoma.

Mr. Foster: In view of the special problems facing northeastern Ontario regarding development and in view of the minister's recent meeting with Ontario ministers, can he tell the House what progress has been made on new initiatives for regional development in northeastern Ontario, especially concerning the Michigan-Manitoulin ferry service which I understand was discussed.

[Translation]

Hon. Marcel Lessard (Minister of Regional Economic Expansion): Mr. Speaker, we held a meeting this morning in Toronto where I took part in the discussions on possible joint development projects of both governments in this vast area of northern Ontario. I must say that our discussions were very positive, that several proposals were submitted to me and that we have agreed to carry on our negotiations. Indeed, I am confident that in the very near future we could conclude some agreements dealing with projects submitted this morning.

As for the specific project suggested by the hon. member, it is included among the many projects considered and we have agreed to continue to analyze it and possibly include it among those to be carried out.