

any connections that the sponsors might or might not have had with any political party".

In view of the opposition by United Way, the opposition of the Social Planning Council of Metropolitan Toronto, and the fact that an organization called COSTI-IIAS has been in the business successfully for 30 years, why did the Minister approve such a duplicitous approach, which is a sell-out of the legitimate unemployed in Canada who have real needs?

**Hon. John Roberts (Minister of Employment and Immigration):** Mr. Speaker, again there are several questions. I thought I made it clear in my first answer that the approval of the project took place before the representations from the various social agencies were received, as he just touched upon in his second question.

There are two other points I would like to make clear. First, groups or people are not precluded from applying for government programs because they have had in the past, or have in the present, some political affiliation. I am sure there are many people of New Democratic persuasion who apply for grants or for contributions. I can assure him that there is not a political determination in the decision making process when I approve or reject a proposal or project, because I do not inquire as to what is the political affiliation of the individuals applying for grants. I think it would be very wrong for me to do so.

I think it would be very wrong for me, for instance, to ask whether a group making a proposal from Toronto is or is not a group of NDP supporters, or whether that group is or is not a group of Conservative supporters. I do not think that is the appropriate question for me to ask in coming to a decision as to whether or not a project should be approved.

**Mr. Waddell:** What is the appropriate question?

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## FORESTRY

### STATE OF INDUSTRY—GOVERNMENT POLICY

**Mr. F. Oberle (Prince George-Peace River):** Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of the Environment, with spare-time responsibilities for forestry. Last week the Government published a report once again reaffirming our worst fears, namely, that 15 years of deliberate policy of neglect have produced a situation where the forest industry is now in a state where we see major shutdowns, the lay-off of 60,000 direct employees in that industry, and shutdowns of large centres, regions, and communities, for which there is no other economic base.

What can the Minister tell us today in terms of any contemplation of new policies which would correct this situation, new policies which would put the spending of the Government under his control so that it is channeled into clear national objectives in terms of restoring our depleted forest base and renewing and protecting our forests from future ravages?

## Petitions

**Hon. Chas. L. Caccia (Minister of the Environment):** Mr. Speaker, without wanting to discourage the Hon. Member about my commitments to forestry matters, which are as intense as his, I draw his attention to the fact that the study, as I understand it, is based upon an assumption, namely, that there would be job losses if the renewal of forests does not take place in his province. Therefore the question is: will this take place?

● (1500)

I would like to bring to the attention of the Hon. Member that in the past three years in the Province of British Columbia, and I am quoting now from memory, there has been an investment on the part of the federal Government of \$12 million, \$42 million and \$35 million respectively. We are committed to this renewal policy, but I must remind the Hon. Member that his province as well has to play a major role because it owns most of the lands.

### NEGOTIATION OF AGREEMENT WITH PROVINCE OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

**Mr. F. Oberle (Prince George-Peace River):** Mr. Speaker, in September, 1982, the Government announced an expenditure of \$130 million. It is realized that the federal Government must assert its responsibility through a federal-provincial agreement. Last week it became apparent that there would not be a renewal of the agreement with British Columbia this year, meaning that there would not be any spending in British Columbia this year of any federal dollars in the area of forest renewal and forest protection. Incidentally, how many other provinces will be deprived of this federal-provincial arrangement? The federal Minister has had a full year to renegotiate this agreement. Why is it he cannot come to terms with his responsibility and assert himself in the manner which is clearly his mandate?

**Hon. Chas. L. Caccia (Minister of the Environment):** Mr. Speaker, I encourage the Hon. Member to check with his friends in Victoria, and not to arrive at hasty conclusions before the negotiations have been concluded.

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## PETITION

### MR. BLAIKIE—DEATHS OF MILITIA MEMBERS

**Mr. Speaker:** I have the honour to inform the House that the petition presented by the Hon. Member for Winnipeg-Birds Hill (Mr. Blaikie) on Monday, February 13, 1984, meets the requirements of the Standing Orders as to form.