

income plan about which we are agreed and a supplementary income plan for those who can earn a living.

**Mr. Caouette (Témiscamingue):** A last supplementary, Mr. Speaker.

When the minister talks about a guaranteed annual income does he mean that he will copy the Social Crediters' program?

**Mr. Lalonde:** Heaven forbid, Mr. Speaker.

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[English]

### CONSUMER AFFAIRS

#### MONITORING RETAIL STORES TO ENSURE CONSUMERS BENEFIT FROM REMOVAL OF SALES TAX ON CLOTHING AND FOOTWEAR—GOVERNMENT ACTION

**Mr. Allan Lawrence (Northumberland-Durham):** Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs. In light of the Prime Minister's statement after the election that the Department of Consumer and Corporate Affairs had been instructed to monitor retail stores to ensure that the reduction in the federal sales tax on clothing and footwear is passed on to consumers, I wonder whether the minister would briefly inform the House what action in this regard has been taken to date.

[Translation]

**Hon. André Ouellet (Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs):** Officials of my department have already met with representatives of private industry. Within a few days I shall send a letter to the presidents of all companies involved. I wish to assure the House that some work is being done in that regard. I announced that a complete report on that matter will be submitted to the Minister of Finance before the end of the year.

● (1430)

[English]

**Mr. Lawrence:** Mr. Speaker, am I to understand then that so far there has been no monitoring by the department itself in this respect?

[Translation]

**Mr. Ouellet:** There has been some already, Mr. Speaker.

[English]

**Mr. James A. McGrath (St. John's East):** Mr. Speaker, I have a question supplementary to that posed by the hon. member for Northumberland-Durham. Are officers of the Department of Consumer and Corporate Affairs actually monitoring the retail trade in Canada to ensure that the tax decreases on clothing and footwear are in fact being passed on to the consumer?

[Translation]

**Mr. Ouellet:** The answer is yes. Such work, the matter of more than a single day, has begun and will extend over a period of weeks. Interested companies were asked to supply information and figures, in order to check that this decrease is indeed passed on. As soon as the work is

### Oral Questions

completed, a report will be submitted to the Minister of Finance. I expect this will take place at the end of the year.

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[English]

### TRANSPORT

#### SUGGESTED REMOVAL FROM REGULATORY BODY RESPONSIBILITY FOR INVESTIGATING ACCIDENTS—GOVERNMENT POSITION

**Mr. J. M. Forrestall (Dartmouth-Halifax East):** Mr. Speaker, in view of the very serious difficulties in conducting the coroner's inquest at Frobisher Bay into a tragic accident a couple of years ago, would the Minister of Transport give some indication as to whether he will now, at the earliest possible opportunity, introduce legislation separating from the regulatory body the responsibility for investigation in respect of transportation accidents in Canada and other related safety procedures and matters?

**Hon. Jean Marchand (Minister of Transport):** Mr. Speaker, I hope we can do this during this present session.

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### CONSUMER AFFAIRS

#### DATE OF INTRODUCTION OF LEGISLATION REGULATING COMPETITION

**Mr. Sinclair Stevens (York-Simcoe):** Mr. Speaker, in view of the statement by the previous Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs that stage two of the governments so-called competition legislation would likely be introduced by the end of this year, could the minister indicate to the House if that is still the schedule, and when does he plan to introduce the legislation?

[Translation]

**Hon. André Ouellet (Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs):** Mr. Speaker, evidently when my predecessor spoke about that schedule, he was not taking into consideration a general election this summer. I have already announced that before proceeding with stage two of that legislation, there would be some intensive consultations with the parties concerned. With my parliamentary secretary and some officials of my department I will be meeting those concerned before the second stage which will surely not be completed before the end of this year.

[English]

**Mr. Stevens:** Mr. Speaker, my supplementary question is directed to the same minister. With unemployment being projected for this time next year at 7.8 per cent, and with prices along with interest rates continuing to soar, will the minister indicate whether he plans to introduce legislation which will lessen rather than add to the regulatory harassment of business, especially of small businessmen in Canada, in order that businessmen in general can get on with creating jobs and productivity in the hope that prices will come down as a consequence?