

and I have asked that it be speeded up as much as possible.

**Mr. J. M. Forrestall (Dartmouth-Halifax East):** In light of the indication from the minister that this very serious matter is being considered, would he refer to the group making this inquiry the recommendations I have brought before the House with respect to an independent transportation safety inquiry commission?

**Mr. Jamieson:** I do not think it would be appropriate to refer it to the Canadian Transport Commission, but if the hon. member will give me more details and tell me how such a plan might be effective I will be glad to consult with all the relevant authorities. Indeed, if it makes more sense than the present arrangement I have indicated I will be prepared to implement it.

**Mr. John L. Skoberg (Moose Jaw):** Mr. Speaker, my supplementary question is for the Minister of Transport. In view of the increasing number of derailments and fatalities that have occurred in the past two or three weeks in rail operations, would the minister not agree to institute a public inquiry into these mishaps rather than the type of inquiries we have seen in the past?

• (1440)

**Mr. Speaker:** Order, please. I am not sure whether a question asked in those terms is in order.

#### ABANDONMENT BY CANADIAN NATIONAL RAILWAYS OF PASSENGER SERVICE TO GRAND CENTRE, ALBERTA

**Mr. Paul Yewchuk (Athabasca):** Mr. Speaker, my supplementary is for the Minister of Transport. Does he intend to take any action to prohibit Canadian National Railways from ending its passenger service to Grand Centre, Alberta?

**Mr. Speaker:** The hon. member for Selkirk.

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#### UNEMPLOYMENT INSURANCE

##### DELAY IN PAYMENT OF BENEFITS—ACTION TO PREVENT LOAN-SHARK OPERATIONS

**Mr. Doug Rowland (Selkirk):** Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Manpower and Immigration. Has the government yet taken any steps to end the practice of lending money at usurious interest rates against the future receipt of unemployment insurance cheques?

**Mr. Ray Perrault (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Manpower and Immigration):** Mr. Speaker, as hon. members are aware, the minister is very concerned about the practice of discounting unemployment insurance benefit warrants. I want to assure the hon. member that consideration is being given to a number of measures designed to halt the practice. I can inform the House that as of now a process is beginning and new regulations are being instituted under the unemployment insurance plan to prevent the use of an address which is not that of a claimant

#### *Inquiries of the Ministry*

for mailing purposes without the permission of the Unemployment Insurance Commission. I must say our survey shows that there is little evidence that the practice of discounting benefit warrants is related directly to delays in payment of UIC benefits.

**Mr. Rowland:** Mr. Speaker, I would ask the parliamentary secretary if the government is contemplating legislation. I can see how this particular regulation will have some beneficial effect, but is the government contemplating legislation to stop this discounting practice permanently with regard to unemployment insurance cheques, pension cheques, T4 slips, income tax rebates and so forth?

**Mr. Perrault:** Mr. Speaker, the answer is yes.

#### ALLEGED DIFFICULTY IN CASHING OF CHEQUES AT BANKS

**Mr. Lincoln M. Alexander (Hamilton West):** Mr. Speaker, I should like to direct a supplementary to the parliamentary secretary. In light of the fact that there seems to be some problem in respect of recipients cashing unemployment insurance cheques in that banks are balking at cashing these cheques, would the parliamentary secretary take it upon himself to discuss this matter with the leaders of the banking industry so that some solution can be found?

**Mr. Ray Perrault (Parliamentary Secretary to Minister of Manpower and Immigration):** Mr. Speaker, I would express the hope that the lending institutions of Canada would accept their social responsibility and provide whatever assistance they can in this direction.

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[Translation]

#### MANPOWER

##### LOCAL INITIATIVES PROGRAM—SUGGESTED EXTENSION OF DEADLINE FOR COMPLETION OF PROJECTS

**Mr. René Matte (Champlain):** Mr. Speaker, I have a question for the Minister of Labour.

Will the municipalities where local initiative projects have been approved after the deadline be authorized to carry on their work after May 31, 1972?

[English]

**Hon. Martin P. O'Connell (Minister of Labour):** Mr. Speaker, I thank the hon. member for sending me notice of his intention to ask this question. I do not think there is any consideration being given at present to the proposed extension. There may be some confusion since there was a recent announcement that under another program begun in the previous year, the loans program, there is an extension from March 31 to May 31. That applied to municipal projects but not to LIP projects.