

the Canada Labour Standards Regulations. A B.C. Supreme Court judge subsequently struck down those regulations, but before the ink was dry on his decision the Government enacted new regulations removing this protection.

Could the Minister tell this House if it is his intention to deny organized workers the same notice of lay-off as other workers, and could he tell the House why the new regulation was passed when a B.C. Supreme Court judge had already ruled similar regulations *ultra vires*?

Hon. Chas. L. Caccia (Minister of Labour): Madam Speaker, as the Hon. Member knows, this matter is now before the B.C. Supreme Court. When a decision is announced by that Court, then of course we will proceed in light of that decision.

NECESSITY FOR NOTIFICATION

Mr. Sid Parker (Kootenay East-Revelstoke): Madam Speaker, the notification provision for lay-offs under the Canada Labour Code says that 16 weeks' notification must be given if more than 50 workers are laid off from an industrial establishment. Bell Canada in Quebec is getting around this by designating literally dozens of industrial establishments within its operation. Because of this, Bell may lay off as many as 400 people without any proper notification.

Could the Minister tell the House if it is his intention that the legislation be used in this way, that is, that 49 people would be laid off without notification in each industrial establishment? If that is not his intention, what steps will he take to prevent this from happening?

Hon. Chas. L. Caccia (Minister of Labour): Madam Speaker, the Hon. Member is elaborating on the same point, and the answer I gave him a moment ago still stands.

* * *

GRAIN

GRAIN TRANSPORTATION AUTHORITY POWERS

Mr. Jack Murta (Lisgar): Madam Speaker, there has been a recent task force report which indicates that the powers of the Grain Transportation Authority should be put into legislation and its powers expanded to supervise performance guarantees and efficiency incentives in what may be a new freight rate policy. Can the Minister of Transport indicate whether or not the Government is contemplating, in its Speech from the Throne in the new year, legislating the powers of that Authority, because this is basically what most farmers and farm organizations on the Prairies are seeking?

Hon. Jean-Luc Pepin (Minister of Transport): Madam Speaker, when the grain transportation co-ordinator was established a few years ago by the then Conservative Government, it was done in a rather hurried fashion, and I am being very charitable. Consequently, all the refinements of the law and regulations were not necessarily taken into account. Since

Oral Questions

then we have lived with some difficulty with respect to this institution.

I have refrained from looking for a major change because that is one of the issues which will be dealt with in the western transportation Bill which is coming into this House in a few months. We hope that the central co-ordinating agency, recommended by Dr. Gilson, or something of that kind, will be created, which will absorb the grain co-ordinator, particularly in its main capacity as car allocator. Other functions might also be given to this central agency. In other words, we hope to rectify the legal situation by the creation of another institution which would take it over.

* * *

FISHERIES

IMPORTATION OF MACKEREL FOR USE AS BAIT

Mr. Lloyd R. Crouse (South Shore): Madam Speaker, Canadian fishermen were encouraged this year to sell their mackerel in over-the-side sales to the Soviets through Joint Trawlers Limited of Sweden for approximately 12 cents a pound. As a result of that, Canadian buyers were unable to compete, and today long liners in Newfoundland, indeed, in all parts of Atlantic Canada, are short of bait and are forced to buy back Canadian mackerel from European suppliers.

I ask the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans how many tons of mackerel has he authorized his Department to purchase, what is the cost to Canadian fishermen, and what increased quotas did he give the Soviets, Poland or Japan, for relinquishing Canadian mackerel for Canadians?

Hon. Pierre De Bané (Minister of Fisheries and Oceans): Madam Speaker, it is always wiser and easier to speak after the fact. Who could have predicted what happened? I am sure my hon. friend, if he knows something about fisheries, knows that no one could have predicted this situation. I have talked with the Cuban Minister of Fisheries and he told me that what happened this year with respect to the squid was something unpredictable.

What we have done is something very, very simple, and I think very wise. We have exchanged surplus offshore mackerel, which would not have been caught by Canadian fishing vessels, in order to secure bait for the fishermen of Newfoundland. I think, in view of the circumstances, the urgency of the need of the fishermen, the decision taken by my Department was the right one.

● (1500)

ALLOCATION EXCHANGES

Mr. Lloyd R. Crouse (South Shore): Madam Speaker, I have a supplementary question. I understand that the Minister did not pay for the mackerel from the Europeans. He has made available some 4,000 tons of halibut which will go to the Soviets or to Poland, and some 2,500 tons of redfish which will go to Japan in the form of quotas, in payment for these fish.