

advantage to large corporations such as Cargill at the expense of farmer-owned wheat pools?

Hon. Don Mazankowski (Minister of Transport): We are looking at various ways and means of increasing the grain hopper carrying fleet. They will all be used as part of the grain carrying fleet under the direction of the co-ordinator. I welcome the opportunity to clarify that matter in response to the hon. member's first question in this House.

Mr. Hovdebo: Recommendation No. 14 in the same Conservative report suggests that supplementary quotas should be allowed to terminals capable of cleaning grain for export. Will the minister assure us that such a decision, which would favour Cargill and the Weyburn terminal at the expense of co-operative elevator companies, will not be implemented?

Mr. Mazankowski: The recommendations to which the hon. member refers are those which came from within the grain industry after extensive consultation with over 30 groups in western Canada associated with grain transportation and handling. All the recommendations will be considered in due course.

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[Translation]

REGIONAL ECONOMIC EXPANSION

CONSTRUCTION OF TAX DATA PROCESSING CENTRE AT JONQUIÈRE, QUEBEC—GOVERNMENT POSITION

Mr. Gilles Marceau (Jonquière): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the right hon. Prime Minister. It deals with the construction of a tax data processing centre at Jonquière.

During the election campaign, the Prime Minister met the representatives of the Saguenay-Lac-Saint-Jean regional development council to whom he promised that if he came to power that construction project would remain unchanged. Now, the writer of an editorial published in a newspaper of the Saguenay-Lac-Saint-Jean region last weekend claims that the government is holding the people hostage, and that the tax data processing centre will not be built before the Quebec referendum is held. May I ask the Prime Minister to deny that information categorically and to give us an indication of recent developments with regard to that important matter, that is, to tell us whether he intends to do something in the very near future about the representations made to him, including the petition signed by 22,000 persons?

Right Hon. Joe Clark (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, I can deny absolutely the allegation published in the newspaper mentioned by the hon. member. I thank the hon. member for letting me know last night that he intended to put a question about the tax data centre at Jonquière. As the hon. member understands, I am sure, that project has not been cancelled by the government; it has only been postponed until such time as

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the financial resources of the government allow that kind of expenditure. The President of the Treasury Board has had meetings with the representatives from Jonquière. A representative of the minister visited the area and discussed the project with the citizens. We hope to be in a position to reach a final decision in that regard as soon as possible, but I cannot do so today, nor can I indicate to the hon. member exactly when I expect to be able to do so.

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● (1500)

[English]

CONFLICT OF INTEREST

APPLICATION TO SPOUSES OF POLITICIANS

Hon. Jeanne Sauvé (Laval-des-Rapides): Mr. Speaker, my question is to the right hon. Prime Minister. It has to do with a short editorial which was published in *The Gazette* this morning about the conflict of interest rules which the Prime Minister imposes on his ministers. Contrary to that article, I sympathize with Jane Crosbie. It is more than sympathy, because the rules the Prime Minister is about to impose on his ministers are of a nature which would incapacitate the spouses of politicians.

Will the Prime Minister side with these spouses—in most cases, women—allow them to operate as free citizens, not to be bundled up with their husbands—

Some hon. Members: Oh, oh!

Mrs. Sauvé: —and be satisfied that they divulge their interests? And will he express some confidence in the oath taken by his ministers that they will not reveal the dealings of cabinet and allow women not to have to sacrifice their careers to the political ambitions of their husbands?

Right Hon. Joe Clark (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, the hon. member raises a very important question. As she knows, the problem is posed not simply for spouses who happen to be women, but also to a degree, which we hope will increase, to spouses who happen to be men.

We believe that conflict of interest guidelines have to deal with two important and combined problems: one is the reality of any conflict; the second is the appearance of any conflict. It was precisely because of the appearance of any conflict that we included in the regulations which we brought down—and which, I admit, are more stringent than those brought down by the former government—the provision relating to spouses.

As I have indicated in a press conference, I also share absolutely the concern expressed by Mrs. Crosbie. I am delighted to report to the House that, as a consequence of the sympathy I have shown for the case she has made, Mrs. Crosbie has now sold her shares and is in a position where she is free of any conflict. However, I think the obligation very clearly rests upon the government to continue a review of conflict of interest guidelines which will deal with the fact and