

Since the authorities of Windsor in my riding have made representations to the hon. minister to obtain home delivery within the city boundaries, would the hon. minister tell us if his department intends to respond favourably to this request? If so, when will this be done?

Hon. André Ouellet (Postmaster General): Mr. Speaker, following the request made by the Windsor authorities, I have asked my senior officers to conduct a new inquiry which will determine if this municipality can indeed be advantaged by a postman service which would distribute the mail. If this inquiry establishes that the locality now has 2,000 delivery points, I can assure the hon. member that we will provide such a service as quickly as possible.

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[English]

TRANSPORT

RAILWAY FREIGHT RATES—DISCUSSIONS WITH ATLANTIC PROVINCES

Mr. Charles H. Thomas (Moncton): Mr. Speaker, my question is for the right hon. Prime Minister. In view of the throne speech promise to meet with the provincial governments to discuss and examine the impact of freight rates on economic development and consumer prices, and in view of the statement emanating from the recent Halifax meeting that the initiative rests with the federal government and the railways, will the Prime Minister tell the House what action has been taken to implement this throne speech promise?

Right Hon. P. E. Trudeau (Prime Minister): Mr. Speaker, the Minister of Transport has announced in the House a few times that such meetings either had gone on or were contemplated. In my letters to the premiers of the provinces regarding a federal-provincial conference of first ministers, I indicated that at this level we would be looking at the result of meetings between the ministers of transport of the various provinces and the federal government.

Mr. Thomas (Moncton): I have a supplementary question, Mr. Speaker, which I will direct to the Minister of Transport. Since the railways have reportedly told the maritime premiers that freight rates should be determined by market forces without consideration of the national interest, is the minister now prepared to meet immediately with the premiers and the railways and to make some decision regarding the responsibilities of our national carriers and what type of assistance should be provided in lieu of freight rate increases?

[Translation]

Hon. Jean Marchand (Minister of Transport): Mr. Speaker, we intend to meet the maritime premiers as soon as possible so as to have an exhaustive discussion on freight rates and I think I will be able to do it within the next few weeks.

Oral Questions

[English]

STUDY OF PROBLEMS AFFECTING WESTERN CANADA

Mr. Don Mazankowski (Vegreville): Mr. Speaker, I have a supplementary for the Minister of Transport which also arises out of the throne speech.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. I hope that the question is a supplementary, though I would doubt that, simply because a question also refers to the throne speech, it really would be a supplementary. I think an effort is being made this afternoon by hon. members, certainly by the Chair, to recognize as many members as possible by permitting as few supplementaries as possible. However, I recognize the hon. member for Vegreville.

Mr. Mazankowski: Thank you, Mr. Speaker, but with all due respect I believe I have a right to be heard. My question has to do with the study due to take place in co-operation with the western provinces respecting transportation needs. In light of the fact the minister indicated that a meeting was going to be held with the maritime provinces, can the minister outline to the House when this study of transportation problems affecting the west is going to take place?

[Translation]

Hon. Jean Marchand (Minister of Transport): Mr. Speaker, at the beginning it had been almost agreed that CNR and CPR officials would meet the premiers or, at least, representatives of the prairie provinces. If the latter want to consult each other prior to meeting the railway officials before the end of March, I think we will be able to meet them after this meeting and have an exhaustive discussion on the freight rates.

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[English]

NATIONAL PARKS

PROVISION OF FACILITIES FOR SKIING

Right Hon. J. G. Diefenbaker (Prince Albert): Mr. Speaker, I should like to ask a question of the Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development having to do with requests that have been made for ski facilities in various national parks across Canada. Would the minister let the House and the country know whether any decision has been made by the government with respect to the requests for such physical facilities for skiing to be provided in these various parks either by the government or by private industry?

[Translation]

Hon. Jean Chrétien (Minister of Indian Affairs and Northern Development): Mr. Speaker, until now in all national parks the government did not create any ski trails at Jasper or Banff; they have been created by private industry in compliance with government regulations. We have not developed any specific program relating to ski facilities in national parks, but I understand that the right hon. member would like to know the situation in the Prince Albert park. We are currently studying this situation and no decision has been taken as yet.