

Oral Questions

the department. Although unemployment continues to be a very serious problem on a number of reservations across the country, I assure the House that some very substantive improvements have been made, particularly in the past four years.

Mr. Muir: A point of order, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker: The hon. member for Cape Breton-The Sydneys on a point of order.

Mr. Muir: I do not know what the parliamentary secretary is talking about, but surely we do not have to listen to this drivel. That is not an answer to my question. The hon. member has not understood the question. He is pontificating in the same way as the right hon. member for Mount Royal.

Mr. Nielsen: A point of order, Mr. Speaker.

Mr. Speaker: The hon. member for Yukon rises on a point of order.

Mr. Nielsen: Mr. Speaker, I raised this point of order previously, namely, that there is no acting minister who is responsible for answering our questions. The Prime Minister told us the other day that the Minister of the Environment is the first acting minister and the Minister of Energy, Mines and Resources is the second acting minister. Surely, there is some minister who is accountable to parliament and responsible for answering questions of this kind.

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. We have reached the end of the question period. The Chair will recognize the hon. member for Skeena on a supplementary, and I think the House owes it to the hon. member for Bellechasse to give him the chance to ask his question.

• (1510)

Mr. Frank Howard (Skeena): Mr. Speaker, may I direct a short supplementary to the hon. member for Kamloops-Cariboo. Can he explain what nutritional value there is in the annual report?

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[Translation]

SHIPPING**INQUIRY RESPECTING CONSTRUCTION OF ICEBREAKERS**

Mr. Adrien Lambert (Bellechasse): Mr. Speaker, I wish to direct a question to the Minister of Transport.

In an answer which appears at page 941 of *Hansard* of February 5, 1973, the minister states that the government intends to increase coastal protection by building new icebreakers.

Can the minister tell the House if the order for the first icebreaker has been given? If so, which company or which shipyard received this order?

Hon. Jean Marchand (Minister of Transport): No, Mr. Speaker, no order has been given and the transaction has not yet been approved by Treasury Board.

[Mr. Marchand (Kamloops-Cariboo).]

[English]

Mr. Speaker: Orders of the day.

GOVERNMENT ORDERS**BUSINESS OF SUPPLY**

SUPPLEMENTARY ESTIMATES (A), 1972-73

Mr. Stanley Knowles (Winnipeg North Centre): Mr. Speaker, I rise on a point of order with respect to the order of business that has just been called, namely, consideration of the business of supply. My point of order relates to the nine notices of opposition which are on today's order paper and which presumably would be called, if they are in order, at this time; of course, they would be called only in order that there can be votes on the motions to approve the particular items which are on the order paper in the name of the President of the Treasury Board (Mr. Drury). It is my contention, Sir, that there is no provision for such notices of opposition to be entertained in the rules under which we are operating today.

Perhaps before I develop that point, which I think is an important one, I might say that even if there were provision for such notices of opposition in the rules that govern us today, it seems to me that the nine notices of opposition are poorly, if not incorrectly, drawn.

As I understand the rules, it is only open to a member putting down a notice of opposition to indicate that he is opposed to an item in its entirety. In the case of each of these nine notices of opposition there is not any notice of opposition in entirety, but only notice of opposition to a portion of the estimate. I do not allege that that is an extremely important point of order, because what is voted on under the provision in our rules is not the notice of opposition but the motion put down by the President of the Treasury Board, which of course presents the House with the choice of voting either for or against the entire item. In any case, that is not the question I am concerned about. Rather it is my point that there is no provision at this stage for notices of this kind.

I remind Your Honour and the House that we are operating under a rule, namely 58, which came into effect only in 1969, so that there is not a great deal of jurisprudence on it. However, I think the wording of the rule and our practice with respect to it are clear.

In December, 1968, when we passed the new rules that came into effect in 1969, we provided for the first time for an arrangement under which it was possible for main estimates, supplementary estimates, interim estimates, or what have you, to be brought before the House under conditions that would provide for no debate at all on them. We have been through this a good many times, both on main estimates as well as on supplementary estimates and interim supply. The theory behind that was that we would have the opportunity on opposition days to discuss any matters we wished, but if we used our opposition days on other matters, we then would be obliged to deal with the estimates without entering into any kind of debate.