

*Inquiries of the Ministry***CONSUMER AFFAIRS****ALLEGED INCREASE IN PROFITS OF SAFEWAY AND GEORGE WESTON—REQUEST FOR INVESTIGATION OF FOOD PRICES**

Mr. Lorne Nystrom (Yorkton-Melville): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs. In view of an increase in profits in the first three months of this year over last year by Safeway of 40 per cent and by George Weston of nearly 50 per cent, and in view of the fact that the rise in the consumer price index was mainly caused by increased food prices, will the minister undertake to investigate these profits with a view to lowering the price of food?

Hon. Robert K. Andras (Minister of Consumer and Corporate Affairs): Mr. Speaker, under the Combines Investigation Act the director of that branch would in the normal course be required to make an investigation whenever he felt the act was being violated. If there is specific information available, I would ask the hon. gentleman to reveal it either to me or to the director. I am sure he will carry out his duties in that regard.

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YOUTH**OPPORTUNITIES FOR YOUTH PROGRAM—ALLEGED SECRET CRITERIA IN PROJECT ASSESSMENT FORM—REQUEST FOR STATEMENT AND TABLING OF DOCUMENT**

Mr. David MacDonald (Egmont): Mr. Speaker, in view of reports last week to the effect that there exists a series of secret criteria within a project assessment and analysis form for internal use by the Opportunities for Youth secretariat, could the minister alleviate some of the fears and concerns on this matter by indicating the nature of such rules, and perhaps also table the document in the House either today or tomorrow?

[Translation]

Hon. Gérard Pelletier (Secretary of State): Mr. Speaker, I don't know where the hon. member got his information, but there is no series of secret criteria; there is a breakdown of general criteria into sub-criteria, which can be deduced from the first ones by those who suggest various projects. It is an analysis method; the five questions become 25 because each one is broken into five elements.

[English]

Mr. MacDonald (Egmont): In view of the fact that a story appeared on the front page of a Toronto newspaper last week to the effect that a number of additional rules in fact were used by the secretariat in deciding which programs were to be approved or not approved, would the minister not be willing to provide that information to members of the House so that we might have a clear picture of the actual basis on which decisions to approve were made, having in mind that the vast majority of projects which were submitted were not approved?

[Translation]

Mr. Pelletier: Mr. Speaker, as I have spent 25 years of my life in journalism, I pity the hon. member with all my

[Mr. Speaker.]

heart if he believes everything he reads on the first page of the newspapers.

Secondly, I would like to tell him that there are no secret documents that could be revealed, and I believe that, when the department's budget is studied by the committee, I will be ready, and my officials too, to answer all questions, including the prejudice, the strengthening of which is being sought at the present time, that has arisen through a wrong interpretation of an answer given by the Prime Minister: No list of projects has been given to the RCMP. I felt that I had to say this.

[English]

Mr. Speaker: Order, please. We should try to move on. The hon. member will be allowed a second supplementary, but we will be running short of time.

Mr. MacDonald (Egmont): Since there has been a shortage of information throughout the piece from the minister concerning the basis on which decisions were made with regard to the more than 19,000 projects submitted, when is the minister going to provide some detailed information not only to members of the House but also to the thousands of students who submitted projects inasmuch as to date most of these people have received only a form letter with none of the information involved?

[Translation]

Mr. Pelletier: Mr. Speaker, that is a question I have already answered four times.

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[English]

POST OFFICE**CONTRACT NEGOTIATIONS WITH UNIONS—POSSIBLE INTERVENTION OF POSTMASTER GENERAL—USE OF NEGOTIATORS FROM LABOUR DEPARTMENT**

Hon. W. G. Dinsdale (Brandon-Souris): Mr. Speaker, my question is directed to the Postmaster General. Now that the President of the Treasury Board is running into heavy seas in connection with the negotiations with the postal unions, would the Postmaster General use his good offices to ensure a fair and more equitable settlement to avoid the possibility of disruption of this important service?

Hon. Jean-Pierre Côté (Postmaster General): Mr. Speaker, I do not know whether the hon. member knows what he is talking about. I have kept silent in the House by request of the unions themselves. I do not think they have made any declarations on the issues that are now under negotiation. So far as the negotiations are concerned, they are still going on and progressing.

Mr. Dinsdale: Mr. Speaker, in view of the statement of the postal unions on May 11, would the Postmaster General encourage the use of the special negotiators in the Department of Labour to bring about a reduction of growing tensions at this time?

Mr. Côté (Longueuil): I do not think the unions made a public statement on May 11.